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*Beaumarchais'*

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE



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*Portrait engraved by Smith, after  
the original by Goussier.*

# THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

OR THE  
USELESS PRECAUTION

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*A Comedy written by*  
BEAUMARCHAIS

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*Translated and Edited by*  
ARTHUR B. MYRICK  
Ph.D. *Lyrics Translated by*  
George Allan England, A.M.

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## INTRODUCTION

**Life of the Author** — Pierre-Augustin Caron, the son of a Parisian watchmaker, was born in the rue Saint-Denis, on the 24th of January, 1732. Though passionately devoted to music, he learned at first his father's trade. When only twenty he invented a new escapement for watches, but his rights were infringed by a rival. The subsequent dispute brought him to the notice of the king, who called him to examine a watch belonging to Mme. de Pompadour. Somewhat elated at this distinction, he set up as watchmaker to the king, though it is doubtful if he ever received such an appointment. At any rate, it is unlikely that his presumption excited any displeasure, for his talent secured him the position of Comptroller in the King's Household. This office brought him a certain standing at Court. Soon afterward he became teacher of the harp to the daughter of Louis XV. About this time, the wife of an old court-official fell violently in love with him, and at her husband's death, in 1757, married him, bringing him her name, De Beaumarchais, and considerable property. This wife lived only one year after marriage, and in 1768 he married another widow, who died in 1779. The sudden death of both wives probably gave rise to the ridiculous accusation that he had poisoned them. Voltaire was doubtless

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right in his judgment that Beaumarchais was far too witty and genial a man to have committed such a crime. In 1761 he bought the title of Secretary to the King, and later acquired a patent of nobility. Together with one Pâris-Duverney, he became interested in several commercial ventures, especially in the exploitation of certain forests in Touraine. In 1764 he made a flying trip to Spain, to defend one of his sisters, who had been subjected to many indignities by one Clavijo, Master of the Archives. Finding it impossible to bring Clavijo to terms, with his usual impulsiveness, Beaumarchais sought a personal audience of the King of Spain, and succeeded in influencing the latter to have Clavijo deprived of all his offices. From this incident was drawn the subject of his first drama, *Eugénie* (1767), followed three years later by *Les Deux Amis*, based on the same subject. In 1770 came the death of his partner and benefactor, Pâris-Duverney. After the settlement of the latter's affairs, his grand-nephew and heir, the Comte de la Blache, accused Beaumarchais of fraud, and sued him for one hundred and thirty-nine thousand livres. On the first trial the plaintiff lost his suit. The case was appealed, and on the second trial success was with the Count. The case was reopened, and this time Beaumarchais was successful, and la Blache was sentenced to pay damages for calumny. In the meantime came Beaumarchais' unfortunate affair with the Duc de Chaulnes; our impulsive author ran away with the Duke's mistress, and later both Beaumarchais and the Duke were imprisoned to prevent a duel. La Blache now seized the opportunity to reopen the suit. Beaumarchais was released conditionally from *Fors-l'Evêque* to protect his interests. The referee, an attorney.

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named Guzman or Gozman, was known to be in the interests of the heir, and as Beaumarchais was unable to reach him, he bribed Madame Guzman with a present of one hundred louis in gold, fifteen in silver, and a gold watch studded with diamonds, to secure him an audience, with the understanding that, were he unsuccessful, the present should be returned. The audience came to naught, and all but the fifteen louis in silver were returned, Madame Guzman pretending that these were retained as a fee for a secretary. Beaumarchais, knowing well enough that the secretary was a myth, angrily demanded the money. Madame Guzman, growing equally impatient, denied all knowledge of the affair. In revenge and despair, our author determined to publish an account of the whole matter in four *Mémoires*. With the most biting wit and scathing satire, he held up the unfortunate attorney and his wife to the mockery of all Paris. Guzman immediately brought suit against him for attempted bribery and defamation of character. The Government condemned the witty author of the *Mémoires*, but within two years, he succeeded in regaining his rights and enjoyed a well-earned triumph over la Blache. In 1775 the *Barbier de Séville* was presented, and he composed the *Mariage de Figaro*, which, however, was not acted until 1784. He became an emissary of the Government, and travelled all over Europe, charged with secret missions to England, Holland, and Germany, partly to effect the suppression of pamphlets injurious to Louis XV. and Marie Antoinette. In 1776 he had a violent quarrel with actors on the question of authors' rights, and made the suggestion that all dramatic writers form a union to safeguard their rights and privileges. With the consent, and even the active support,

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of the French Ministry, he undertook to furnish arms to the American revolutionists, and became a creditor of the youthful republic for large sums which waited many years for settlement. After the prodigious success of the *Mariage de Figaro*, he was arrested and imprisoned in Saint Lazare upon a trifling charge, but was soon released. In 1787 he brought out his opera, *Tarare*, and in 1792 *la Mère Coupable*. During the Revolution he suffered financial ruin and persecution. He was commissioned by the Convention to purchase a large number of muskets in Holland. For some reason, the affair miscarried, and he was imprisoned in l'Abbaye. His family was also arrested and his property confiscated. After his escape he lived for some time at Homburg as an *émigré*. He returned to Paris in 1796, and died peaceably in 1799, having miraculously avoided the guillotine.

**Resourcefulness.**—There are few figures in the literature of France during the eighteenth century as interesting as Beaumarchais. In the astonishing activity of his career, he is an eighteenth-century Benvenuto Cellini, like Cellini, a man of many occupations, and, like him, equally resourceful in all. Watch-maker, master of music, dramatist, man of affairs, and diplomatic agent, he was certainly one of the all-round men of the century. None were better aware of their abilities than Beaumarchais. United with a never-failing alertness and buoyancy in the face of obstacles, he possessed a Cellini-like daring and confidence in himself which may hardly be matched in his century. The risk which he incurred in the publication of the famous *Mémoires*, which enlisted the laughers upon his side, may be inferred, especially since they contained so many bitter

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jibes directed at those in authority, from an ordinance, enacted in 1769, punishing with death '*tout auteur d'écrits tendant à émouvoir les esprits.*' The *Mémoires* doubtless disarmed many by the freshness and charming wit of his sallies. 'What a man!' wrote Voltaire. 'He combines everything—pleasantry, seriousness, reason, gaiety, vigour, pathos, all sorts of eloquence, and yet he strives after none of them; he confounds all his adversaries, and he reads lessons to his judges. His simplicity enchants me, and I pardon him his imprudence and impulsiveness. . . . If the *Barbier de Séville* does not succeed, tell Beaumarchais to have his *Mémoires* put upon the stage.' Considerable conceit was mingled with his strong sense of humour and shrewd common sense. It is said of him that when he was ordered to discontinue his music lessons to the Princesses of France, he imagined that the order proceeded from a fear that his charms would captivate Madame Adelaide.

His wit often saved him from the attacks of his rivals at court envious of his rising fortunes. An amusing anecdote is told of a courtier who brought him a watch one day, remarking: 'Sir, you are so skilful with clocks and watches, I beg of you, examine my watch, which is out of order.'

'Sir,' tranquilly replies Beaumarchais, 'since I have ceased to follow that trade, I have become very clumsy.'

'Ah, sir! do not refuse me this favour.'

'As you will; but I warn you that I am clumsy.'

Then, taking the watch, he opens it, pretends to examine it, drops it to the floor, where it is badly broken; then making his questioner a sweeping bow: 'Ah, sir! how many excuses I



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should make you ! But I told you how it was, and yet you insisted.'

The *Barbier de Séville* was first presented on the 23rd of February, 1775, and immediately caused a sensation. At first blush, it seems difficult to understand why it should have produced such a commotion in the dramatic world. It was due, however, to certain unexpected and daring innovations in the piece. In the first place, the employment of prose instead of verse in the comedy, which has continued almost without exception to the present day, excited the displeasure of the critics. Again, Beaumarchais had broken the shackles of the simpler classic comedy, and had given his fancy freer rein in the creation of situation and the development of the intrigue. The devotees of the classic type objected vigorously to the complicated and sustained intrigue of the *Barbier*. Besides abandoning the conventional development of the intrigue of the classic comedy, he had also modified the treatment of character. The classic comedy presented certain general types which were brought forward again and again on the stage, which certainly no development in psychology and only occasional changes of costume. They had, for example, the youthful lover, the jealous old lover, the scheming valet, and the confidential maid, both acting in the interest of the lover and his mistress, some of them deriving from antiquity. By this time they had become mere abstractions, galvanised into an artificial life. Beaumarchais saw clearly that some new element must be infused into the treatment of character in order to arrest the rapidly approaching decay of the comedy, and to this end he added, in the *Barbier*, the study of manners. With this also came the charm of a Spanish setting and Spanish costume. Upon the

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latter point the author was especially insistent. Prefaced to some of the earlier editions of the comedy is a long and careful description of the costume to be worn by the characters. The psychology of his characters is still somewhat crude; they still possess many of the traits distinctive of the old classic types. It remained for the comedy writers of the nineteenth century to complete the separation. But underneath the old spell, they all show a personal spirit which is entirely new.

Two of the characters in the *Barbier* are especially worthy of notice for the combination of old and new elements. Figaro, the mainspring of the whole comedy, is a lineal descendant of an old and honourable family of valets, one of his latest ancestors being Crispin in Regnard's *Folies Amoureuses*. Yet Figaro is a little more than that; he is a philosopher, a reasoner who laughs at everything for fear that he might have to weep; he is a little of Gil Blas, he is Beaumarchais himself, the plying of many trades, the personification of a gaiety and *insouciance* which belongs not only to Beaumarchais, but to the French people. Valet, gazetteer, poet, dramatist, he displays all of Beaumarchais' smiling bravery and surprising alertness in the face of misfortune.

Rosine deserves remark for a most curious combination of the extreme sensibility of the period and the clever bourgeois cunning of Figaro. Her sentimental song on the awakening of Spring is couched in the most approved sensible style. Beaumarchais, himself, in his justification, calls attention to the remarkable dexterity with which she avoids the jealous suspicion of her guardian.

Another novel element which we see invading the stage in the *Barbier* is the bourgeoisie. The only figure of noble family

in the comedy is Count Almaviva, who allows himself to be captivated by, and marries, the pretty and charming, but still quite bourgeois, Rosine, with scarcely a thought of the disparity in rank.

**Adverse Criticism.**—The piece was written at first in four acts, but between the time of the granting of the permit to play and the first performance the author expanded it to five acts. The audience not only took umbrage at the suspension of the intrigue to the last moment, but also at certain farcical elements which had been introduced. The objectionable passages were greeted with whistles and cat-calls. The trouble began with the entrance of Eveillé. 'The piece is a farce,' cried one critic, and Fréron followed by calling out that the Comédie-Française was being desecrated by barbarians. Although the subsequent performances, after the comedy's restoration to the original form, were a complete success, Beaumarchais insisted upon adding to the title-pages of editions during his life, the words '*Tombée, 23 Février, 1775.*'

He was especially incensed at the critic's attacks upon innovations in the piece, and their failure to see and commend what he rightly considered to be the chief excellence of the comedy. A glance at a few passages from his reply throws considerable light upon the character of the adverse criticism.

**The Author's Defence.**—'Had he (the critic) well understood the play, would he have failed to praise all the finest passages in the work? That he has not noticed the manner in which the first act brings on and gaily deploys all the characters of the play we may pardon him.'

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'That he has not noticed some small bit of comedy in the great scene of the second act, where, despite the fury and distrust of the jealous man, his ward succeeds in putting him off the scent with regard to a letter which has been handed to her in his presence, and in making him beg her pardon on bended knees for the suspicion which he has displayed, I can easily conceive.'

'That he has not said a single word about the scene of Bazile's stupefaction, in the third act, which seemed so new on the stage, and which furnished the spectators so much enjoyment, I am not at all astonished.'

'Also that he was scarcely able to appreciate the embarrassment into which the author is voluntarily cast in the last act, when he makes the ward confess to her guardian that the Count has stolen the key to the blind; and how the author extricates himself in a couple of words, and goes off enjoying the new anxiety which he has inspired in the spectators: certainly, it is a small matter.

Of the *Barbier*, Beaumarchais has said: 'Giving rein to the gaiety of my character, I have attempted, in my *Barbier de Séville*, to restore to the stage a frank, open gaiety, combining it with the light tone of our present-day pleasantries; but as even that was in some sort a novelty the piece was bitterly opposed. It would seem as if I had shaken the State.'

**Popularity.**—Its popularity is certainly not due to its originality in the choice of a subject, but rather to its infusion with a new life. It originated in antiquity, and a century before Beaumarchais, formed the groundwork of Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and Regnard's *Folies Amoureuses*. It is the compulsion of

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of the interest which is excited in us coupled with a wit and a style as dry and as sparkling as champagne, which makes us forget the age of the subject. The piece displays the most lively *sens du théâtre* in the clever arrangement of effective situations and charming tableaux. The interest is kept up to the end; at the very last moment the audience is puzzled to know how this most extraordinary entanglement is going to be unravelled. Again, the jaded interest of the eighteenth-century audience was spurred by the author's personal references, throughout the piece, to the world and society, at a time when such references were, to say the least, risky. Audiences, for example, found peculiarly piquant Figaro's comments on the injustices of the world, and his complaint that the world and the established order of things gave him no opportunity to make use of his talents except as the servant of others.

In the future the development of character was going to be studied with greater care, style handled with greater firmness, and the wit and raillery developed into pure and vigorous satire; but the *Barbier* was certainly one of the literary triumphs of its own century, a triumph of dramatic ingenuity and nervous style which will remain for all time as one of the masterpieces of French comedy.

**Editions and Adaptations.**—The first edition of the *Barbier de Seville* was published at Paris by Ruault, in 1775, with two reprints in the same year, and others in 1776, 1778, and 1782. Another edition was published in 1776 by Delalain, and reprinted in 1777. Still another appeared from the press of Duchesne, in 1782. From that time to 1900, there have been twenty-three further editions, the last by Flammarion.

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It was translated four times, twice into German, once into Spanish, and once into Italian. There have been two rather free adaptations, one in German and the other in Danish.

The possibilities of the comedy as a motive for opera were quickly perceived by a well-known Italian composer of the eighteenth century, Giovanni Paisiello. He had been invited to St. Petersburg by the Empress Catherine, in 1776, and it was very probably during the first part of his eight years' residence there that he composed his *Barbiere di Siviglia*. Thirty or forty years later another operatic version was put upon the stage by Gioacchino Antonio Rossini, who used the original libretto of Paisiello. *Almaviva*, as the new opera was called, upon its first production at Rome in 1816, was roundly hissed. A few performances, however, sufficed to make the piece a general favourite. Its name was afterwards changed to that of the original opera, which has been since forgotten, and its career from that time has been a perpetual triumph.



THE BARBER OF SEVILLE



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

**COUNT ALMAVIVA**, a grandee of Spain, the unknown lover of Rosine.

**BARTHOLO**, a physician, guardian of Rosine.

**ROSINE**, a young lady of noble birth, and the ward of Bartholo.

**FIGARO**, a barber of Seville.

**DON BAZILE**, organist, and singing-master to Rosine.

**LA JEUNESSE**, an old domestic of Bartholo.

**L'EVEILLÉ**, another servant of Bartholo, a simpleton and sluggard.

A NOTARY.

An **ALCLADE** and a Justice.

**POLICEMEN** and Servants with torches.

Costumes in the old Spanish fashion.

The scene is laid in Seville in the first act, in the street, and under the windows of Rosine : the remainder of the piece is in the house of Doctor Bartholo.

# THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

## A COMEDY

### ACT I

#### SCENE I

*The stage represents a street in Seville : windows looking upon the street are barred.*

*The Count in a heavy brown cloak and broad-brimmed hat. He looks at his watch as he walks back and forth.*

*Count.* The morning is not so far advanced as I thought ; the hour at which she usually shows herself behind her blinds is still far off. No matter ; I would far rather arrive too soon than miss the one moment when I may see her. If any of my amiable friends at court could see me one hundred leagues from Madrid, lingering beneath the window of a lady to whom I have never spoken, they would certainly

ACT I. SC. 2.

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take me for a Spaniard of Isabella's time. Why not? Every one seeks his own happiness. Mine I find in the heart of Rosine. What ! follow a lady to Seville, when Madrid and the court everywhere offer pleasures so easily attained ! That itself is the thing I shun. I am weary to death of conquests which self-interest, convenience, or vanity are yielding me every day. Ah ! 'tis so sweet to be loved for oneself alone ! and if I could be perfectly sure that under this disguise . . . The devil take this unseasonable rascal !

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SCENE II

*Figaro ; the Count concealing himself.*

*Figaro, with a guitar slung across his back by a broad ribbon, paper and pencil in hand, singing gaily.*

' Away with sorrow consuming !  
Without the fire of good liquor inspiring,  
Without enlivening pleasure,  
All men would live in a stupor,  
With very good prospects of dying.'

Really, that's not so bad, so far, is it ?

With very good prospects of dying.  
Generous wine and idleness  
Shall e'er dispute my heart.'

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Well, no ! they do not dispute ; they reign together  
peaceably enough. . . . 11

‘ Shall ever share my heart.’

Shall I say *se partagent* ? Well, thank goodness, we  
writers of comic operas are not so particular about  
style. Nowadays, what is scarcely worth saying, we  
sing. [Sings

‘Generous wine and idleness  
Shall ever share my heart.’

I should like to finish with something fine, brilliant,  
sparkling, which would really look like an idea.  
[Kneels and writes as he sings.

‘ Shall ever share my heart. 21  
If one enjoys my tenderness. . . .  
The other is my joy.’

Pshaw ! that’s flat. It is not that. . . . I need an  
antithesis :

‘ If one be my mistress,  
The other . . . ’

There ! I have it. . . .

‘The other shall be my slave.’

Well done, Master Figaro. [Writes and sings. 30

‘Generous wine and idleness  
Shall ever share my heart.  
If one be my mistress,  
The other shall be my slave,  
The other shall be my slave,  
The other shall be my slave!’

There, how is that? When we have the accompaniments, we shall see now, gentlemen of the cabal, if I know what I am talking about. [*He perceives the Count.*] I have seen that priest somewhere. [*He rises.*] 41

*Count* [*aside*]. I am sure I know this fellow.

*Figaro*. No, he's no priest. His proud and noble bearing . . .

*Count*. That grotesque figure . . .

*Figaro*. I was right. Count Almaviva.

*Count*. I think this rascal must be Figaro.

*Figaro*. The very same, my lord.

*Count*. You knave! If you say one word . . .

*Figaro*. Yes, I recognise you; the same familiar kindness with which you have always honoured me. 50

*Count*. I did not recognise you at all. You were so tall and stout . . .

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ACT, I. SC. 2.

*Figaro.* What would you have, my lord? 'tis hard times.

*Count.* Poor fellow! what are you doing in Seville?

Not long since I recommended you to a position in the government.

*Figaro.* I received my appointment, my lord, and my gratitude . . .

*Count.* Call me Lindor. Don't you see, by my disguise, that I wish to be unknown? 60

*Figaro.* I will leave you.

*Count.* On the contrary. I await the issue of a certain affair, and two men chatting together are less suspect than one pacing back and forth. Let us appear to be chatting. Now, this position.

*Figaro.* The minister, having considered your excellency's recommendation, forthwith appointed me apothecary's boy.

*Count.* In the army hospitals?

*Figaro.* No, indeed; in the Andalusian studs. 70

*Count* [*laughing*]. Truly, a fine beginning!

*Figaro.* The position was not a bad one; for, having the dressings and the drugs in my charge, I often sold the men the best of horse medicines . . .

*Count.* Which killed the king's loyal subjects?

*Figaro.* Ha! ha! There is no universal remedy which has not failed sometimes to cure Galicians, Catalans, or Auvergnats.

*Count.* Why, then, did you resign it?

*Figaro.* Resign it! Faith, I was removed. Some one

maligned me to the powers. 'Envy with crooked fingers, with visage pale and livid.' 82

*Count.* For pity's sake, my friend! Do you also make verses? I saw you scratching away there on your knee, and singing this very morning.

*Figaro.* That is really the cause of my misfortune, your excellency. When they reported to the minister that I was making, if I may so, some very fair garlands of verses to Cloris, that I was sending riddles to the journals, that madrigals of my 90 composition were the fashion, in short, when he found out that I was everywhere in print, he took the matter tragically, and had me dismissed the service, on the pretext that a love of letters is quite incompatible with the spirit of business.

*Count.* Powerfully reasoned! And you failed to represent to him . . .

*Figaro.* I thought myself only too happy to be forgotten; for I am persuaded that a grandee does us good enough when he does us no harm. 100

*Count.* You do not tell the whole story. I remember that in my service you were something of a rascal.

*Figaro.* Good Heavens! my lord, you would have a poor fellow absolutely faultless.

*Count.* Lazy, dissolute . . .

*Figaro.* In comparison with the virtues demanded of a domestic, does your excellency know of many masters worthy of being valets?

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ACT I. SC. 2.

*Count* [*laughing*]. Not so bad. And you retired to this city? 110

*Figaro*. No, not immediately.

*Count* [*stopping him*]. One moment . . . I thought 'twas she. . . . Keep on talking, I can hear you well enough.

*Figaro*. On my return to Madrid, I tried my literary talents again ; and the theatre seemed to me a field of honour . . .

*Count*. Ah ! God help you there ! 118

*Figaro* [*while he replies, the Count gazes attentively in the direction of the blind*]. Truly I know not why I had not the greatest success ; for I had filled the pit with the most excellent workers, with hands like paddles ; I had forbidden gloves, canes, and every-thing else which produces only dull applause, and, on my honour, before the piece was played, the *café* seemed to be perfectly well-disposed towards us. But the efforts of the cabal . . .

*Count*. Ah ! the cabal ! The last refuge of our fallen authr. 129

*Figaro*. I may say that as well as another ; why not ? They hissed me, but if I could ever get them together again . . .

*Count*. You would take your revenge by boring them to death.

*Figaro*. Ah ! how I lay it up against them ! Zounds !

*Count*. You swear ! Do you know that in the courts



you have only twenty-four hours in which to curse your judges?

*Figaro.* You have twenty-four years in the theatre ; life is only too short to exhaust such resentment. 140

*Count.* Your merry anger delights me. But you have not told me what caused you to leave Madrid.

*Figaro.* My good angel, your excellency, since I am happy enough to find my old master. Recognising that, at Madrid, the republic of letters is the republic of wolves, continually at each others' throats, and that, delivered up to the contempt to which this ridiculous obstinacy leads them, all the insects, gnats, mosquitoes and critics, all the envious, journalists, booksellers, censors, and, in fact, everything able to cling to the hide of the unhappy man of letters, succeeded in lacerating and sucking the little substance left to them ; worn out with writing, weary of myself, disgusted with others, overwhelmed with debts, and innocent of cash ; finally convinced that the tangible revenue from my razor is preferable to the empty honours of the pen, I left Madrid, my baggage slung upon my shoulder, philosophically wandering through the two Castiles, la Mancha, Estremadura, Sierra-Morena, and Andalusia ; welcomed in one town, imprisoned in the next, and everywhere superior to events ; praised by some, blamed by others, making the best of good weather and enduring the bad ; mocking the foolish and

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ACT I. SC. 3.

braving the wicked ; laughing in my misery and shaving all ; you see me finally established in Seville and ready to serve your excellency in anything you may be pleased to order. 168

*Count.* Who, then, has endowed you with so gay a philosophy ?

*Figaro.* Continual misfortune. I always hasten to laugh at everything for fear that I may be obliged to weep. What are you staring at over there ?

*Count.* Let us hide.

*Figaro.* Why ?

*Count.* Come, you blockhead ! You will be my destruction. [ *They conceal themselves.* 177

### SCENE III

*Bartholo, Rosine.*

*The blind in the first story opens, and Bartholo and Rosine appear at the window.*

*Rosine.* What a pleasure it is to breathe the fresh air !  
This blind is so rarely opened . . .

*Bartholo.* What is that paper ?

*Rosine.* These are a few couplets from *The Useless Precaution*, which my singing master gave me yesterday.

*Bartholo.* What is this *Useless Precaution*?

*Rosine.* 'Tis a new comedy.

*Bartholo.* Some new play! Some new sort of folly!

*Rosine.* I know nothing about it. 10

*Bartholo.* Well, the journals and the authorities will  
avenge us. Barbarous age . . . !

*Rosine.* You are always criticising our poor century.

*Bartholo.* Pardon the liberty that I take! What has it  
produced that we should praise it? Follies of all  
sorts: liberty of thought, gravitation, electricity,  
religious toleration, inoculation, quinine, the en-  
cyclopædia, and plays . . .

*Rosine* [*as the paper drops from her hand and falls into  
the street*]. Oh! my song! My song dropped from  
my hand as I was listening to you. . . . Run, run,  
sir—my song—it will be lost! 21

*Bartholo.* Confound it! When you had it why did you  
not hold it? [*Leaves the balcony.*]

*Rosine* [*glances about the room and signals to the Count  
in the street*]. Sh! [*The Count appears.*] Pick it up  
quickly, make your escape. [*The Count seizes the  
paper and retreats to his hiding-place.*]

*Bartholo* [*appears in the street and searches for the song*].  
Where is it? I cannot find it.

*Rosine.* Under the balcony, at the foot of the wall.

<sup>1</sup> Bartholo did not like the drama. Perhaps he had composed a  
tragedy in his youth. (Note by Beaumarchais.) Bartholo  
preferred the old *tragédie* which was beginning to give way to the  
new drama.

## The Barber of Seville

ACT I. SC. 4.

*Bartholo.* You have sent me upon a fine errand. Has any one passed by? 31

*Rosine.* I have seen no one.

*Bartholo [aside].* And I, who have been so simple as to search . . . Bartholo, my friend, you are indeed a simpleton. This should teach you never to open the blinds. [He re-enters the house.

*Rosine [in the balcony].* My excuse lies in my unhappiness ; alone, ill, and a butt for the persecutions of an odious man, is it a crime to try to escape the bonds of slavery? 40

*Bartholo [appearing in the balcony].* Go in, young lady ; it is my fault that you have lost your song ; but this misfortune will never overtake you again ; I swear it. [Carefully locks the blind.

### SCENE IV

*The Count, Figaro.*

*They enter stealthily.*

*Count.* Now that they have gone in, let us examine this song, in which a mystery surely lies hidden. Ah, it is a note !

*Figaro.* He asked what *The Useless Precaution* was !

*Count [reading excitedly].* 'Your devotion excites my

curiosity. As soon as my guardian has gone out, sing carelessly to the well-known air of those couplets, a few words which shall tell me the name, the rank, and the intentions of the gentleman who appears so desperately attached to the unfortunate Rosine.' 10

*Figaro* [imitating Rosine's voice]. My song, I have lost my song ; run, quickly [laughing]. Ha ! ha ! Oh ! these women ! Would you teach cunning to the most unsophisticated ? Just shut her up.

*Count*. My dear Rosine !

*Figaro*. My lord, I am at no more trouble for the motives for your masquerade ; you are making love here in perspective.

*Count*. I see that you know how the land lies ; but if you chatter . . . 20

*Figaro*. I, chatter ! To reassure you I shall employ none of the high-sounding phrases of honour and devotion which are continually abused. I have only one word to say ; my interest will answer for my loyalty ; weigh everything in that balance, and . . .

*Count*. Very well ! Know, then, that six months ago I met, by chance, in the Prado, a young lady of such beauty. . . . Well, you have just seen her. I have sought her in vain through all Madrid. It was only a few days ago that I discovered that her name is Rosine, that she is of noble blood, an orphan, and married to an old physician of that city, one Bartholo. 33

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II SC. 4.

*Figaro.* A fine bird, by my faith ! and a hard one to root out ! But who told you that she is the doctor's wife ?

*Count.* Everybody.

*Figaro.* That is a story invented by him on his arrival from Madrid, to give the slip to the gallants, and put them off the scent. She is still only his ward, but soon . . . 40

*Count* [*passionately*]. Never ! Ah ! what news ! I was resolved to dare everything to express my disappointment, and now I find her free ! There's not a moment to lose ; I must win her love, and snatch her from the unworthy husband to whom she is destined. Do you know her guardian ?

*Figaro.* As well as my mother.

*Count.* What sort of man is he ?

*Figaro* [*vivaciously*]. He is a fine big, short, young old man, dapple grey, crafty, well-shaven, *blasé*, peeping and prying, grumbling and moaning, all at once. 51

*Count* [*impatiently*]. Ah ! I have seen him. And his character ?

*Figaro.* Brutal, avaricious, and absurdly jealous of his ward, who hates him with a deadly hatred.

*Count.* So his power to please is . . .

*Figaro.* Zero.

*Count.* So much the better ! His honesty ?

*Figaro.* He is quite honest enough to escape hanging.

*Count.* So much the better ! To punish a rascal while at the same moment I find my happiness . . . 61

*Figaro.* Is to do a public and private good ; really, a masterpiece of morality, my lord !

*Count.* You say that fear of the gallants makes him keep his doors closed upon her ?

*Figaro.* Upon every one if he could stop up the cracks in it. . . .

*Count.* The devil ! So much the worse ! Do you happen to have access to his house ?

*Figaro.* Have I ! The house that I occupy belongs to the doctor, who lodges me there *gratis*. 71

*Count.* Ha ! ha !

*Figaro.* Yes, indeed ! And I, in my gratitude, promise him ten gold pistoles a year, also *gratis*. •

*Count* [*impatiently*]. You are his tenant ?

*Figaro.* Much more ; his barber, his surgeon, his apothecary ; there is not a stroke of the ~~razor~~, the lancet, or the syringe in his house which does not proceed from the hand of your humble servant.

*Count* [*embracing him*]. Ah, Figaro, my friend ! you shall be my saviour and my guardian angel. 81

*Figaro.* The plague ! How soon has my usefulness shortened the distance between us ! Talk to me of men with a passion !

*Count.* Fortunate Figaro ! You shall see my Rosine ! you shall see her ! Can you imagine your good fortune ? •

*Figaro.* That's the usual lover's talk ! I do not adore her. I wish that you could take my place.

# The Barber of Seville

ACT I. SC. 4.

*Count.* Ah! if we could only dodge these vigilant fellows! 91

*Figaro.* That's what I was thinking of.

*Count.* For but a single day.

*Figaro.* By setting the servants to look out for their own interests, we shall prevent them from interfering with the interests of others.

*Count.* Doubtless. Well?

*Figaro* [*reflecting*]. I shall rack my brains to see whether *materia medica* will not furnish some innocent means. . . . 100

*Count.* Scoundrel!

*Figaro.* Am I going to hurt them? They all need my ministrations. It is only a question of how to treat them all at once.

*Count.* But this doctor may grow suspicious?

*Figaro.* We shall have to set to work so quickly that he will have no time to suspect. I have an idea. The regiment of the heir-apparent has just arrived in the city.

*Count.* The colonel is one of my friends. 110

*Figaro.* Good. Go to the doctor's in a trooper's uniform with your billet; he will be obliged to lodge you; and I will look after the rest.

*Count.* Excellent!

*Figaro.* It would be still better if you appeared a trifle intoxicated . . .

*Count.* Why?



ACT I. SC. 4.

The Barber of Seville

*Figaro.* And treat him a bit cavalierly, for you have an excellent excuse for being unreasonable.

*Count.* Again I ask you why? 120

*Figaro.* So that he will take no offence, and think you more in a hurry to go to bed than carry on intrigues in his house.

*Count.* Beautifully planned! But why do you not figure in it?

*Figaro.* I, indeed! We shall be fortunate enough if he does not recognise you whom he has never seen. And how should I introduce you afterward?

*Count.* You are right. 129

*Figaro.* It is because you may not be able to act this difficult part. Cavalier . . . the worse for wine . . .

*Count.* You are laughing at me [*Imitating the speech of a drunkard*]. Is this the house of Doctor Bartholo, my friend?

*Figaro.* Truly, not bad, only a little more unsteady in the legs. [*In a more drunken voice.*] Is this the house of Doctor Bartholo . . .

*Count.* Shame upon you! 'Tis a low and vulgar drunkenness.

*Figaro.* A good one and a pleasant one. 140

*Count.* The door opens.

*Figaro.* Our man: let us make off until he is gone.

**SCENE V**

*The Count and Figaro, hidden, Bartholo.*

*Bartholo* [comes out, speaking to some one in the house].

I shall return instantly, let no one enter the house.  
How foolish I was to come down. As soon as she  
asked me, I should have suspected. . . . Why is  
Bazile so late? He was to arrange everything for  
my secret marriage to-morrow: and no news! Let  
us go and find out what may have delayed him.

**SCENE VI**

*The Count, Figaro.*

*Count.* What did I hear? To-morrow he marries Rosine  
secretly!

*Figaro.* My lord, the difficulties in the way of success  
only add to the necessity of the undertaking.

*Count.* What sort of a man is this Bazile who is meddling  
with this marriage?

*Figaro.* A poor devil who teaches music to the doctor's  
ward, infatuated with his art, a bit of a rascal, always

needy, on his knees before a crown-piece, who, in short, will be very easy to manage, my lord : . .  
[*glancing at the blind*]. There she is ! there she is !  
12

*Count.* Who ?

*Figaro.* Behind the blind, there she is ! there she is !  
Don't look ! don't look !

*Count.* Why ?

*Figaro.* Did she not write : ' Sing carelessly ' ?—that is to say, sing . . . as if you were singing . . . only for the sake of singing. Oh ! there she is ! there she is !  
20

*Count.* Since I have begun to interest her without being known to her, I shall keep the name of Lindor which I have assumed ; my triumph will have a greater charm. [*He unfolds the paper which Rosine has thrown out of the window.*] But how shall I sing to this music. I cannot make verses.

*Figaro.* Every verse that occurs to you, my lord, will be excellent : in love, the heart assists the productions of the mind . . . And take my guitar.

*Count.* What shall I do with it ? . I play so badly ! 30

*Figaro.* Can a man like you be ignorant of anything ?  
With the back of the hand : tum, tum tum. . . . To sing without a guitar in Seville ! You would soon be recognised ; faith, you would soon be hunted out. [*Figaro stands close to the wall under the balcony.*]

## The Barber of Seville

ACT I. SC. 6.

*Count* [*sings, walking back and forth, and accompanying himself on the guitar*].

Thou shalt know my name, since to command is  
thine ; 40

Unknown to thee, I dared to show my adoration ;  
My name once known, I've nought but desperation.

What matters it ? My master's will is mine.

*Figaro* [*in a low voice*]. Fine, upon my word ! Courage,  
my lord !

*Count*. Lindor am I, of common birth and nation ;  
A simple student's life is all I claim :  
Alas ! why bear I not some knight's exalted name,  
To offer you his brilliant rank and station ? 50

*Figaro*. Deuce take it ! I, who pique myself on my verses,  
could do no better.

*Count*. Here with a tender voice will I  
My hopeless love proclaim, each morning bright,  
My pleasures shall be bounded by thy sight ;  
Each morning here with tender notes and long  
Will I my hopeless love of thee proclaim !  
To see thee . . . this shall be my joy, my flame,  
And mayest thou pleasure find to list my song !

*Figaro*. Oh ! my word ! this last one ! . . . [*approaches  
his master and kisses the hem of his cloak*]. 61

*Count*. Figaro !

*Figaro*. Your excellency ?

*Count*. Do you think she heard me ?

*Rosine* [*within singing* :]

'All tells me now of Lindor's charms,'

Whom I must love with constancy . . .'

[*They hear the window closed noisily.*]

*Figaro*. Now, do you think that she heard you?

*Count*. She has closed her window, some one has apparently entered the room. 70

*Figaro*. Ah! poor little thing! how she trembles as she sings! She is caught, my lord.

*Count*. She avails herself of the very means which she pointed out to me:

'All tells me now of Lindor's charm.

What grace! what a pretty wit!'

*Figaro*. What cunning! what love!

*Count*. That is enough! I am Rosine's . . . for ever.

*Figaro*. You forget, my lord, that she cannot hear you now. 80

*Count*. Master Figaro! I have but one word to say: she will be my wife, and if you further my plan by refusing to disclose my name to her . . . you understand me, you know me . . .

*Figaro*. I agree. Come, Figaro, your fortune is made, my boy.

*Count*. Let us retire, for fear of exciting suspicion.

*Figaro* [*vivaciously*]. I shall enter this house, where by means of my art, with a single stroke of my wand, I shall put vigilance to sleep, awake love, banish jealousy, mislead intrigue, and overcome all

## The Barber of Seville

ACT I. SC. 6.

obstacles. You, my lord, my house, a soldier's uniform, the billet, and gold in your pockets. 93

*Count.* Gold for whom?

*Figaro* [*impatiently*]. Gold, for Heaven's sake, gold! it is the sinews of intrigue!

*Count.* Calm yourself, Figaro, I shall bring plenty of it.

*Figaro* [*going off*]. I shall rejoin you in a short time.

*Count.* Figaro! 100

*Figaro.* What is it?

*Count.* Your guitar?

*Figaro.* I have forgotten my guitar! I am losing my wits! [Exit.

*Count.* And your house, stupid!

*Figaro* [*returning*]. Ah! really, I am astonished! My shop is a few steps away; 'tis painted blue, has leaden window-frames, three cups in the air, an eye in a hand, with a motto, *Consilio manuque*. [Exit.

## ACT II

*The apartments of Rosine. The casement at the rear of the stage is closed by a barred shutter.*

## SCENE I

*Rosine alone, a candle in her hand. She takes some paper and sits down to the table to write.*

*Rosine.* Marcelline is ill, all the servants are busy; and no one sees me writing. I know not whether these walls have eyes and ears, or whether my Argus commands some evil genius who is always warning him at precisely the wrong moment; but I cannot say one word, take one step, that he does not immediately guess its purpose. . . . Ah! Lindor! [*She seals the letter.*] Well, I must seal my letter, though I know not when or how I may deliver it. As I looked through my blind, I saw him talking for a long time to the barber Figaro. The good fellow has sometimes shown some pity for me; if I could only speak to him for a moment. . . .

SCENE II

*Rosine, Figaro.*

*Rosine [in surprise].* Ah ! Master Figaro, how glad I am to see you !

*Figaro.* Your health, madame ?

*Rosine.* Not too good, Master Figaro, I am dying of ennui.

*Figaro.* I believe you ; only fools catten upon it.

*Rosine.* With whom were you talking so earnestly down there ? I did not hear ; but . . . 8

*Figaro.* With a young bachelor, a relation of mine, a young man of fine parts, full of wit, sentiment, and talent, and gifted, moreover, with a most attractive countenance.

*Rosine.* Oh ! most excellent, I assure you ! and his name ? . . .

*Figaro.* Lindor. He has nothing ; but had he not left Madrid in such a hurry, he might have found some good position there.

*Rosine [thoughtlessly].* He will find one, Master Figaro, he will find one. Such a man as he whose portrait you have painted is not born to remain unknown. 20

*Figaro [aside].* Very well. [*Aloud.*] But he has one great fault which will always stand in the way of his advancement.



ACT II. SC. 2.

The Barber of Seville

*Rosine.* A fault, Master Figaro ! A fault ! you are quite sure ?

*Figaro.* He is in love.

*Rosine.* He is in love ! and you call that a fault ?

*Figaro.* In truth, 'tis none but in regard to his poor fortune.

*Rosine.* Ah ! how unjust is fate ! And has he told you whom he loves ? I am curious . . . 31

*Figaro.* You are the last, madame, to whom I should like to entrust such a secret as this.

*Rosine* [*beseechingly*]. Why, Master Figaro ? I am discreet ; the young man is your relation, he interests me greatly . . . tell me, then.

*Figaro* [*with a sly glance*]. Imagine the prettiest little darling, sweet, tender, gentle-mannered, fresh as the rose, provoking one's appetite, with a dainty foot, a figure agile and slender, plump arms, a rosy mouth, and hands ! cheeks ! teeth ! eyes ! . . . 41

*Rosine.* Does she live in this city ?

*Figaro.* In this quarter of it.

*Rosine.* On this street, perhaps ?

*Figaro.* Not two feet away from me.

*Rosine.* Ah ! how charming ! . . . for your relation  
And this person is ? . . .

*Figaro.* Have I not named her ?

*Rosine* [*excitedly*]. It is the only thing that you have forgotten, Master Figaro. Tell me, please tell me quickly ; if any one should come in, I might never know . . . 51

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 2.

*Figaro.* Do you really wish to know, madame? Well! this person is . . . your guardian's ward.

*Rosine.* Ward?

*Figaro.* Doctor Bartholo's: yes, madame.

*Rosine* [*with emotion*]. Ah, Master Figaro! . . . I do not believe it, I assure you.

*Figaro.* And that is what he is himself dying to convince you of.

*Rosine.* You make me tremble, Master Figaro. 60

*Figaro.* Shame, tremble indeed! a bad plan, madame; when one yields to the fear of suffering, one suffers from fear. Besides, I have come to rid you of all your watchers until to-morrow.

*Rosine.* If he loves me, he must prove it to me by remaining absolutely quiet.

*Figaro.* Indeed, madame! may love and repose dwell side by side in the same heart? Poor youth is so unfortunate, nowadays, that it has but this terrible choice, love without repose, or repose without love.

*Rosine* [*dropping her eyes*]. Repose without love . . . seems . . . 72

*Figaro.* Ah! very languid indeed. It seems, in fact, that love without repose cuts a much better figure; and, as for myself, if I were a woman . . .

*Rosine* [*in embarrassment*]. It is quite certain that a young lady cannot prevent a good man from esteeming her.

*Figaro.* So my relation loves you to distraction.

ACT II. SC. 2.

The Barber of Seville

*Rosine.* But if he should be guilty of any imprudence,  
Master Figaro, he would ruin us. 81

*Figaro* [*aside*]. He would ruin us . . . [*Aloud.*] If you  
would forbid him expressly in a little note . . . a  
note has a great deal of power.

*Rosine* [*gives him the letter which she has just written*].  
I have no time to write this over again, but when  
you give it to him, tell him . . . well, tell him . . .  
[*Listens.*]

*Figaro.* No one, madame.

*Rosine.* That all that I do is out of pure friendship. 90

*Figaro.* That speaks for itself. God-a-mercy! Love  
sets us another pace!

*Rosine.* Only out of pure friendship, you understand?  
All that I fear is, that, discouraged by difficulties . . .

*Figaro.* As if his passion were only a will-o'-the-wisp.  
Remember, madame, that the gust which blows out  
a light will light a brazier, and that, often enough,  
we are the brazier. Speaking of that only, he  
breathes out such a flame, that he has made me  
almost delirious with his passion, I who have  
nothing to do with the whole matter! 101

*Rosine.* Good Heaven! I hear my guardian. If he  
should find you here . . . Go out through the music-  
room, and go down as softly as you can.

*Figaro.* Be easy about that. [*Aside, holding up the  
letter.*] This is worth more than all my observations.  
[*Exit.*

SCENE III

*Rosine [alone].* I am beside myself with anxiety until he has left the house . . . How I like him, that good Figaro ! He is a very honest fellow, a good relation ! Ah ! There is my tyrant, I must take up my work. [*She blows out the candle, sits down, and takes up some embroidery.*]

SCENE IV

*Bartholo, Rosine.*

*Bartholo [in a rage].* Ah ! curses upon that villain, that piratical rogue, Figaro ! Zounds ! I cannot leave my house one moment, and be sure when I return . . .

*Rosine.* What makes you so angry, sir ?

*Bartholo.* That damned barber who just crippled my whole household in a jiffy ! he has given Eveillé a sleeping powder, La Jeunesse something to make him sneeze, he has bled Marcelline in the foot ; even down to my mule ; he has put a poultice over the eyes of a poor blind beast ! Because he owes me one hundred crowns, he is in haste to balance his account. Ah ! let him bring them ! And no one in the ante-room ! one might enter this apartment as easily as the parade-ground.

14

*Rosine.* And who but yourself, sir?

*Bartholo.* I would rather have unreasonable fears than expose myself without precautions. There are bold and daring fellows everywhere . . . This very morning, did not some one quickly pick up your song while I was going down to get it? Oh! I . . .

*Rosine.* That is giving importance to everything just for the pleasure of it! The wind may have carried it off, or the first passer-by, how do I know? 23

*Bartholo.* The wind, the first passer-by! . . . There is no wind, madame, there is no first passer-by in the world; it is always some one waiting there on purpose to pick up all the papers which any woman affects to drop by mistake.

*Rosine.* Affects, sir?

*Bartholo.* Yes, madame, affects. 30

*Rosine* [*aside*]. Oh! the wicked old fellow!

*Bartholo.* But it will never happen again, because I am going to have this blind locked.

*Rosine.* Do better than that; wall up all the windows; between a prison and a cell there is very little choice.

*Bartholo.* As for those which look out upon the street, it would not be a bad idea, perhaps . . . At least, that barber has not been here?

*Rosine.* Is he also an object of your jealousy? 40

*Bartholo.* Just as much as any other.

*Rosine.* How civilly you answer me!

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 4.

*Bartholo.* Ah! trust in everybody, and you will soon have in your house a wife to deceive you, good friends to spirit her off, and good servants to help them do it.

*Rosine.* What! you will not grant, indeed, that one has principles against the seduction of Master Figaro?

*Bartholo.* Who the devil knows anything about the peculiarities of women? And how many of these high and mighty virtues have I seen . . . 51

*Rosine [angrily].* But, sir, if one must only be a man to please us, why is it, then, that you are so repulsive to me?

*Bartholo [in amazement].* Why? . . . why? . . . You do not answer my question about that barber?

• *Rosine [provoked].* Yes, then! Yes, that man came into my room, I saw him, I spoke to him, I will not conceal from you, even, that I found him very agreeable, and may you die of vexation! [*Exit.*]

## SCENE V

*Bartholo [alone].* Ah ! the Jews !<sup>1</sup> those dogs of servants !  
Jeunesse ! Eveillé ! that damned Eveillé !

## SCENE VI

*Bartholo, Eveillé.*

*Eveillé [enters yawning, only half awake].* Aah, aah, ah,  
ah . . .

*Bartholo.* Where were you, you confounded idiot, when  
that barber entered the house ?

*Eveillé.* Sir, I was . . . ah, aah, ah . . .

*Bartholo.* Hatching out some trick, no doubt ? And you  
did not see him ?

*Eveillé.* Certainly I saw him, because he found me very  
ill, as he said ; and it must have been very true,  
because I commenced to have pains in all my limbs,  
just hearing him talk . . . ah, ah, aah . . . II

*Bartholo [mimics him].* Just hearing him talk. . . .  
Where is that good-for-nothing Jeunesse ? To drug  
this little fellow without my prescription ! There is  
some rascality in it.

<sup>1</sup> An abusive epithet for his servants.

SCENE VII

•  
*The Preceding.*

*Jeunesse enters like an old man, leaning upon a cane; he sneezes several times.*

*Eveillé [still yawning]* Jeunesse !

*Bartholo.* You will sneeze Sunday.

*Jeunesse.* That's more than fifty . . . fifty times . . . in a minute. [*Sneezes.*] I am exhausted.

*Bartholo.* I ask you twice if any one entered Rosine's apartment, and you tell me only that that barber . . .

*Eveillé [still yawning].* Is Master Figaro any one? aah, ah . . .

*Bartholo.* I would wager that the sly fellow has an understanding with him. 10

*Eveillé [weeping foolishly].* I ! . . . I, have an understanding ! . . .

*Jeunesse [sneezing].* But sir, is there any justice . . . is there any justice?

*Bartholo.* Justice ! Justice for you, you wretches ! I am your master, who is always right.

*Jeunesse [sneezing].* But, now, when a thing is true . . .

*Bartholo.* When a thing is true. If I do not wish it to be true, I claim that it is not true. If you would only allow all these rascals to be right, you would soon see what would become of authority. 21



*Jeunesse* [*sneezing*]. You may as well give me my dismissal. It's a terrible position and a devilish row all the time.

*Eveillé* [*weeping*]. A poor respectable fellow is treated like a wretch.

*Bartholo*. Out with you, you poor respectable fellow!  
[*Mimics them.*] T'chew! t'chew! One sneezes and the other yawns in my face. 29

*Jeunesse*. Ah, sir! I swear that without Miss Rosine there would be no way of getting on in the house.

[*Exit sneezing.*]

*Bartholo*. In what a plight has Figaro left them all! See what's the matter; the villain wants to pay me my hundred crowns without opening his purse.

SCENE VIII

*Bartholo, Don Bazile, Figaro.*

*The latter, hidden in the cabinet, appears from time to time and listens.*

*Bartholo* [*continues*]. Ah, Don Bazile! have you come to give Rosine her music-lesson?

*Bazile*. That is the least part of my haste.

*Bartholo*. I went to see you without finding you at home.

*Bazile*. I had gone out on your business. I have learned some sorry news.

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 8.

*Bartholo.* For yourself?

*Bazile.* No, for you. Count Almaviva is in this city.

*Bartholo.* Speak lower. • The one who had Rosine sought for throughout the whole city of Madrid? 10

*Bazile.* He is lodging in a house on the Plaza, and comes out every day in disguise.

*Bartholo.* He has designs upon me, that's certain. What shall I do?

*Bazile.* If he were a private citizen, we might soon get him out of the way.

*Bartholo.* • Yes, we might ambush him in the evening, with sword and buckler . . .

*Bazile.* *Bohe-Deus!* Compromise ourselves! To start a nasty affair, that is fine, and meanwhile slander him to the utmost *concedo*. 21

*Bartholo.* That is a singular way of getting rid of a man.

*Bazile.* Slander, sir? You hardly know what you despise. I have seen the best of men nearly crushed under it. Believe me that there is no vulgar wickedness, no horror, no absurd story, that one cannot fasten upon the idle residents of a great city if he go about it in the right way, and we have some pretty skilful fellows here! At first, a slight rumour, skimming the ground like the swallow before the storm, *pianissimo*, it murmurs, and twists and leaves behind it its poisonous trail. So-and-so hears it and *piano piano* slips it gracefully into your ear. • The evil is done, it sprouts, crawls, travels on, and

*rinforzando* from mouth to mouth, it goes on at the deuce of a pace ; then, suddenly, I know not how, you see slander arising, hissing, swelling, and visibly growing. It rushes forward, extends its flight, whirls, envelopes, tears, bursts, and thunders, and becomes, thank Heaven, a general cry, a public *crescendo*, a universal chorus of hate and denunciation. Who the deuce could withstand it? 42

*Bartholo*. What old wives' tale are you telling me? And what connection may this *piano-crescendo* have with my situation?

*Bazile*. What! what connection! What one does everywhere to put "his enemy out of the way, must now be done to prevent yours from further approach.

*Bartholo*. Approach? I intend to marry Rosine before she knows that this count even exists. 51

*Bazile*. In that case, you have not a moment to lose.

*Bartholo*. Why don't you hasten, Bazile? I entrusted all the details of this affair to you.

*Bazile*. Yes, but you skimmed on the expenses ; and in the harmony of good order, an unequal marriage, a wicked judgment, and evident injustice, are discords that we must always watch for and prevent, by the perfect accord of gold.

*Bartholo* [*giving him money*]. Well, we shall have to give in to you ; but to continue . . . 61

*Bazile*. That's what I call talking. It will be all over

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 9 .

to-morrow ; it is for you to prevent any one from  
warning your ward to-day.

*Bartholo.* Trust to me. • Are you coming this evening ?

*Bazile.* Do not count upon me. Your marriage alone  
will keep me busy the whole day ; do not count  
upon me.

*Bartholo* [*accompanies him to the door*]. Your servant.

*Bazile.* No ceremony, doctor. 70

*Bartholo.* No, indeed. I wish to close the street door  
after you.

### SCENE IX

*Figaro* [*alone, issuing from the cabinet*]. Oh ! a good  
precaution, indeed ! Close your street door, then,  
and I shall open it again for the count as I go out.  
What a great rogue is that Bazile ! Luckily he is  
even more foolish than rascally. One needs station,  
family, name, rank, and, in short, the regard of the  
world, to make any sensation in the world as a  
slanderer. But a Bazile ! His lies would never pass  
current.

SCENE X

*Rosine, in haste, Figaro.*

*Rosine.* What ! you are still there, Master Figaro?

*Figaro.* Luckily for you, miss. Your guardian and your singing-master, thinking that they were here alone, have spoken very clearly. . . .

*Rosine.* And you listened to them, Master Figaro? Do you know that that is very wrong?

*Figaro.* To listen? That is the very best way to hear well. Know, then, that your guardian is preparing to wed you to-morrow.

*Rosine.* Ah ! great Heaven ! 10

*Figaro.* Fear nothing ; we shall give him so much to do that he will have no time to think of that.

*Rosine.* He is returning ; go out by the little staircase. You terrify me. [Exit Figaro.]

SCENE XI

*Bartholo, Rosine.*

*Rosine.* You were here with some one, sir?

*Bartholo.* Don Bazile, whom I have just accompanied to the door, and with good reason. You would have preferred that it was Master Figaro?

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. II.,

*Rosine.* I assure you, it's all the same to me.

*Bartholo.* I should like to know what that barber was so anxious to tell you.

*Rosine.* Must we talk seriously? He gave me an account of Marcelline's condition, and, so he says, she is none too well. 10

*Bartholo.* Give you an account? I will wager that he was commissioned to hand you some letter.

*Rosine.* And from whom, if you please?

*Bartholo.* Oh! from whom! from some one whom women never name. How should I know? Perhaps the answer to the paper that dropped from the window.

*Rosine* [*aside*]. He is perfectly right, to be sure. [*Aloud.*] It would serve you right if it was. 20

*Bartholo* [*examines Rosine's hand*]. That is it. You have been writing.

*Rosine* [*in embarrassment*]. You will be skilful indeed to make me acknowledge it.

*Bartholo* [*taking her right hand*]. I? Not at all! But your finger is stained with ink. . . . What do you make of that, you sly miss?

*Rosine.* What a cursed man!

*Bartholo* [*still holding her hand*]. A woman always thinks that she is safe when she is alone. 30

*Rosine.* Ah! No doubt. . . . A fine proof! . . . Stop, sir, you are twisting my arms. I burned myself with the candle, and I have always been told that

you must immediately dip it in ink ; that is what I did.

*Bartholo.* That is what you did? Let us see if the second witness will corroborate the deposition of the first. I am certain that there were six sheets in this package of paper, for I have counted them every morning as well as to-day. 40

*Rosine [aside].* Oh ! what a fool ! . . .

*Bartholo [counting].* Three, four, five ! . . .

*Rosine.* The sixth. . . .

*Bartholo.* I see very clearly that there is no sixth.

*Rosine [dropping her eyes].* The sixth? I used it to make a bag for some bon-bons which I sent to little Mistress Figaro.<sup>1</sup>

*Bartholo.* Little Mistress Figaro? And the pen, which was brand-new, how did that become black? Was it in writing her address?

*Rosine.* This man has a genius for jealousy ! . . .  
[*Aloud.*] I used it to sketch a faded flower on the jacket which I am embroidering. 53

*Bartholo.* How edifying that is ! In order to be believed, my child, you should not blush when concealing the truth so fast ; but you do not know that yet.

*Rosine.* What ! Who would not blush, sir, to see such damaging deductions drawn from the most innocent circumstances?

*Bartholo.* Certainly I am wrong ; to burn one's finger,

<sup>1</sup> We are not told explicitly who she is.

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 12.

dip it in the ink, to make bon-bon bags for Mistress Figaro, and to sketch an embroidery design ! What more innocent ! But how many lies told to conceal a single fact ! *I am alone, I am not observed, I may lie as I please :* but the end of her finger is still black, the pen is soiled, and the paper is missing ! Of course, we could not think of everything. Indeed, my young lady, when I go out into the city, a good double lock shall answer for you. 69

### SCENE XII

*The Count, Bartholo, Rosine.*

*Count [in a cavalry uniform, feigning intoxication and singing:]* ' Let's wake her,' etc.

*Bartholo.* What does this fellow wish of us ? A soldier ! Go into your room, young lady.

*Count [singing].* ' Let's wake her, [*and advancing toward Rosine.*] Which of you two ladies is named Doctor Balordo ? ' ' [*Aside to Rosine.*] I am Lindor.

*Bartholo.* Bartholo !

*Rosine.* He speaks of Lindor.

*Count.* Balordo, Barque-à-l'eau, I don't care which, only I must know which of the two.\* . . . [*To Rosine, showing her a paper.*] Take this letter. 12

\* Italian—booby.



*Bartholo.* Which ! You see very well that it is I ! Which, forsooth ! Retire to your room, Rosine, this man seems to be drunk !

*Rosine.* But you are alone, sir. A woman sometimes inspires a little respect.

*Bartholo.* Off with you ; I am not timid.

SCENE XIII

*The Count, Bartholo.*

*Count.* Oh ! I recognised you immediately by your description.

*Bartholo* [*to the Count, who is folding up the letter*].

What are you hiding in your pocket ? .

*Count.* I am hiding this in my pocket so that you will not know what it is.

*Bartholo.* My description ! Those fellows are for ever believing that they are talking to soldiers !

*Count.* Do you think that it is such a hard matter to describe you ? 10

The nodding head, the bald and polished crown,  
The wall-eyed, blear, and savage-squinting frown,  
The manners like a fierce Algonquin chief,  
The heavy figure, warped beyond belief,  
The crooked shoulder and swarthy skin,  
As black as any Moorish child of sin,

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 13.

The nose, moreover, like a baldaquin,  
The bent and twisted leg, for ever flexed,  
The hangman's voice, confused with words perplexed,  
And all his vicious appetites declare

20

This man's the pearl of doctors, rich and rare !

*Bartholo.* What do you mean? Have you come here to  
insult me? Clear out this moment !

*Count.* Clear out ! Ah, pshaw ! That's a churlish speech.

Can you read, doctor . . . Barbe-à-l'eau ?

*Bartholo.* Another silly question.

*Count.* Oh ! don't let that worry you ; for I, who am at  
least as much of a doctor as yourself . . .

*Bartholo.* What is that ?

*Count.* Am I not horse-doctor to the regiment? That is  
why they have lodged me with a colleague.

31

*Bartholo.* He dares to compare a farrier ! . . .

*Count.* No, doctor, I will not proclaim

That this our art can put to shame

Old Hippocrates and his crew ;

Your knowledge, comrade, it is true,

Hath a success of wider sway,

The ill it may not bear away,

Yet bear off patients not a few.

Do I not speak you fairly ?

40

*Bartholo.* It becomes you well, you ignorant manipu-  
lator, so to revile the first, the greatest, and the  
most useful of the arts !

*Count.* Useful indeed for those who practise it.

*Bartholo.* An art honouring the sun which shines upon  
its successes !

*Count.* And whose blunders the earth makes haste to  
cover.

*Bartholo.* I see very well, you saucy fellow, that you are  
only accustomed to talk to horses. 50

*Count.* Talk to horses ! Ah, doctor ! a poor wit for a  
witty doctor. . . . Is it not notorious that the farrier  
always cures his patients without speaking to them,  
though, on the contrary, the physician talks much to  
his. . . .

*Bartholo.* Without curing them, you mean ?

*Count.* You have said so.

*Bartholo.* Who the devil sends us this cursed drunkard ?

*Count.* My dear fellow, I think that you are firing  
epigrams at me ! 60

*Bartholo.* Well, what would you have ? what do you  
want ?

*Count* [*feigning a rage*]. Well then ! What do I want ?  
Don't you see ?

SCENE XIV

*Rosine, The Count, Bartholo.*

*Rosine* [*in haste*]. Master soldier, do not get angry, I beg  
you ! [*To Bartholo.*] Speak to him gently, sir : an  
unreasonable man . . .

*Count.* You are right ; he *is* unreasonable ; but *we* are

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 14.

reasonable ! I, polite, you, pretty . . . that's enough.  
To tell the truth, I wish to have dealings with no one  
in this house but you.

*Rosine.* What can I do to serve you, sir ?

*Count.* A mere trifle, my child. If there is any  
obscurity in my words . . . 10

*Rosine.* I shall understand their meaning.

*Count* [*showing her the letter*]. Now, confine yourself to  
the letter, to the letter. It is only this . . . that you  
give me a bed to-night.

*Bartholo.* Nothing but that ?

*Count.* No more. Read the note which our quarter-master  
has written you.

*Bartholo.* Let us see. [*The Count hides the letter and  
gives him another paper. Bartholo reads.*] 'Doctor  
Bartholo will receive, feed, lodge, and bed' . . . 21

*Count* [*leaning over his shoulder*]. Bed !

*Bartholo.* 'For one night only, one Lindor called the  
Scholar, trooper in the regiment.'

*Rosine.* It is he, it is he !

*Bartholo* [*quickly to Rosine*]. What is that ?

*Count.* Well, am I wrong now, Doctor Bartholo ?

*Bartholo.* One might say that this man takes a malicious  
pleasure in belabouring me in every possible way.  
To the devil with your Barbaro, Barbe-à-l'eau ! and  
tell your impertinent quarter-master that since my  
journey to Madrid I am exempt from lodging  
soldiers. 33

*Count* [*aside*]. O Heaven ! What a vexatious misfortune !

*Bartholo*. Ha ! ha ! my friend, that puts you out a little ?

Clear out this very moment.

*Count* [*aside*]. I nearly betrayed myself. [*Aloud.*] Be off ! if you are exempt from men of war, you are not exempt from politeness ! Decamp ! Show me your exemption warrant ; although I cannot read, I shall soon see . . . 41

*Bartholo*. What has that to do with it ? It is in this bureau . . .

*Count* [*as he approaches, it says without moving*]. Ah ! my fair Rosine !

*Rosine*. What, Lindor, is it you ?

*Count*. At all events take this letter.

*Rosine*. Take care, he has his eyes upon us.

*Count*. Take out your handkerchief, I will drop the letter  
[*He approaches.*]

*Bartholo*. Gently, gently, sir soldier, I do not like my wife looked at so closely. 53

*Count*. Is she your wife ?

*Bartholo*. And what then ?

*Count*. I took you for her grandfather, paternal, maternal, eternal. There are at least three generations between her and yourself.

*Bartholo* [*reading from a parchment*]. ' In consideration of good and faithful testimony proffered us . . . ' 11

*Count* [*strikes the parchments from his hand to the floor*]. Do I need this string of words ?

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 14.

*Bartholo.* You know very well, soldier, that if I call my people, I will have you treated forthwith as you deserve.

*Count.* A fight! Ah, willingly! that is my trade [*showing a pistol in his belt*] and here is something to throw powder in their eyes. Perhaps you have never seen a battle, madame?

*Rosine.* Nor do I wish to see one. 20

*Count.* Nothing, however, is as gay as a battle! Imagine [*pushing the doctor*], in the first place, that the enemy is on one side of the ravine, and the friends on the other. [*To Rosine, showing her the letter.*] Now take out your handkerchief. [*Spits on the floor.*] That's the ravine, you understand.

*Rosine takes out her handkerchief. The Count drops his letter between them.*

*Bartholo* [*stooping*]. Ha! ha!

*Count.* There! . . . I was going to teach you all the secrets of my trade. . . . Truly, a very discreet lady! Has she not just dropped a note from her pocket?

*Bartholo.* Give it to me. 33

*Count.* Softly, papa! No meddling, if you please. If a prescription for rhubarb had fallen out of yours? . . .

*Rosine* [*reaches for it*]. Ah! I know what it is, master soldier. [*She takes the letter and hides it in the little pocket of her apron.*]

*Bartholo.* Are you going to get out ?

*Count.* Well, I will go. Goodbye, doctor ; no bitterness.

A little compliment, my dear fellow : pray Death to forget me for a few more campaigns : life has never been so dear to me. 43

*Bartholo.* Never mind, if I had so much credit with Death . . .

*Count.* With Death ! Are you not a physician ? You do so much for Death, that he can refuse you nothing. *[Exit.*

SCENE XV

*Bartholo, Rosine.*

*Bartholo* [*watches him out*]. He is gone at last. [*Aside.*]  
Let us dissemble.

*Rosine.* Now confess, sir, that he is a very gay fellow, this young soldier ! Despite his drunkenness, I can see that he does not lack wit, nor a certain amount of education.

*Bartholo.* Fortunate, my love, that we have been able to get rid of him ! But are you not a little anxious to read me the paper that he handed you ?

*Rosine.* What paper ? 10

*Bartholo.* The one that he pretended to pick up to hand to you.

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 13.

*Rosine.* Good! that is a letter from my cousin the officer, which had dropped from my pocket.

*Bartholo.* I had an idea that he got it out of his own.

*Rosine.* I recognised it easily.

*Bartholo.* What does it cost to look at it.

*Rosine.* I do not know what I have done with it.

*Bartholo* [*pointing to her pocket*]. You put it there.

*Rosine.* Oh yes! absent-mindedly. 20

*Bartholo.* Oh! certainly. You will probably see that it is some piece of foolishness.

*Rosine* [*aside*]. There is no way of refusing him without making him angry.

*Bartholo.* Give it to me, my dear.

*Rosine.* But what do you mean, sir, by insisting? Do you distrust me?

*Bartholo.* But why are you so unwilling to show it to me? 29

*Rosine.* I repeat, sir, that this paper is no other than a letter from my cousin, which you delivered to me yesterday unsealed; and in regard to that, I will tell you frankly that your liberties displease me exceedingly.

*Bartholo.* I do not understand you.

*Rosine.* Shall I examine every paper addressed to you? Why do you take it upon you to examine everything addressed to me? If it is jealousy, it insults me; if it is the abuse of a power usurped, I am even more disgusted. 40



*Bartholo.* What, disgusted ! You have never before spoken to me in this fashion.

*Rosine.* If I have been moderate until to-day, it was not to give you any right to offend me with impunity.

*Bartholo.* What offence are you talking about ?

*Rosine.* It is unheard of to permit any one to open one's letters.

*Bartholo.* Not even your wife's ?

*Rosine.* I am not yet your wife. But why should she be made the object of an indignity that you would not offer to every one ? 52

*Bartholo.* You are trying to put me off the scent, and divert my attention from the note, which is, no doubt, a missive from some lover ! But I shall see it, I assure you.

*Rosine.* You shall not see it. If you approach me, I flee this house, and I shall ask refuge of the first comer.

*Bartholo.* Who will not receive you.

*Rosine.* We shall see about that. 60

*Bartholo.* We are not in France, where they always give way to women ; but in order to destroy your illusion, I shall lock the door.

*Rosine* [as he departs to do so]. Ah ! Heaven ! What shall I do ? Let us quickly exchange it for my cousin's letter, and give him a chance to find it. [She makes the exchange, puts her cousin's letter in her pocket, so that it protrudes a trifle.]

## The Barber of Seville

ACT II. SC. 13.

*Bartholo [returning].* Ah! now I expect to see it.

*Rosine.* By what right, if you please? 70

*Bartholo.* By the right most universally recognised, the right of might.

*Rosine.* You may kill me before you get it from me.

*Bartholo [stamping with vexation].* Madame! madame!

...  
*Rosine [falls into an arm-chair and feigns illness].* Oh! what an outrage! . . .

*Bartholo.* Give me that letter, or you will have reason to fear my anger.

*Rosine [falling backward.]* Unfortunate Rosine! 80

*Bartholo.* What is the matter with you?

*Rosine.* What a terrible future.

*Bartholo.* Rosine!

*Rosine.* I am choking with anger.

*Bartholo.* She is ill.

*Rosine.* I am fainting. . . . I am dying.

*Bartholo [feels her pulse and says aside].* Heavens! the letter! Let us read it before she knows it.

[He continues to feel her pulse, and seizes the letter, which he tries to read by turning aside a little.] 90

*Rosine [still reclining].* Ah! unfortunate! . . .

*Bartholo [drops his arm and says aside].* How mad are we to learn what we always fear to know.

*Rosine.* Ah! poor Rosine!

*Bartholo.* The use of perfumes produces spasmodic affections. [He reads behind the arm-chair as he

*feels her pulse. Rosine rises a little, gazes at him fixedly, nods, and falls back without a word.]*

*Bartholo [aside].* O Heaven! it is her cousin's letter. Cursed anxiety! Now how shall I appease her? At least, let her not know that I have read it! [*He pretends to raise her up and slips the letter into her pocket.*] 103

*Rosine [sighs].* Ah! . . .

*Bartholo.* Well! it is nothing, my child, a slight attack of the vapours, that is all; for your pulse has not varied one beat. [*He turns to take a flask from the table.*]

*Rosine [aside].* He has replaced my letter! very well.

*Bartholo.* My dear Rosine, a little of these spirits. 110

*Rosine.* I wish nothing from you; leave me alone.

*Bartholo.* I confess that I was a little too rough about the note.

*Rosine.* He is still talking of the note! It is your manner of asking for things which is disgusting.

*Bartholo [on his knees].* Your pardon. I soon saw that I was quite wrong; you see me at your feet, ready to make reparation.

*Rosine.* Yes, pardon indeed! when you believe that this letter does not come from my cousin. 120

*Bartholo.* Whether it comes from him or any one else, I ask for no explanation.

*Rosine [presenting him the letter].* You see that by decent behaviour you may obtain anything of me. Read it.

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ACT II. SC. 16.

*Bartholo.* This open manner would dissipate my suspicions if I were unfortunate enough to have any.

*Rosine.* Read it, sir.

*Bartholo* [*draws back*]. God forbid that I should offer you such an insult !

*Rosine.* You would displease me by refusing it. 130

*Bartholo.* Receive as a recompense this mark of my perfect confidence. I am going to see poor Marcelline, whom that Figaro has, for some odd reason, bled in the foot ; will you not come also ?

*Rosine.* I will go up in a moment. •

*Bartholo.* Since we have made peace, my darling, give me your hand. If you could only love me, how happy you might be !

*Rosine* [*dropping her eyes*]. If you would only please me, ah ! how I should love you ! 140

*Bartholo.* I will please you, I will please you ! and when I say that I will please you ! . . . [*Exit.*]

### SCENE XVI

*Rosine* [*watches him go out*]. Ah, Lindor ! He says that he will please me ! . . . Let us read this letter which has almost caused me so much sorrow. [*She reads and cries out :*] Ah ! . . . I am too late, he asks me to start an open quarrel with my guardian. I had such a good opportunity and I let it escape

me ! When I received the letter I felt that I blushed to the eyes. Ah ! my guardian is right, I am far from having that acquaintance with the world which, he often tells me, assures the manners of women on every occasion ! But an unjust man would succeed in making an intriguer of innocence itself.

ACT III

SCENE I

*Bartholo* [alone and in despair]. What caprices! what caprices! She seemed quite satisfied . . . There! I wish some one could tell me who the devil has put it into her head not to wish any more lessons from Don Bazile! She knows that he has something to do with my marriage . . . [A knock at the door.] Do everything in the world to please a woman. If you omit one single point . . . one only . . . [Another knock.] Let's see who it is.

SCENE II

*Bartholo, Count as a student.*

*Count.* May peace and joy for ever dwell herein.

*Bartholo* [shortly]. Never was wish in better season.

*Count.* I am Alonzo, bachelor, licentiate . . .

*Bartholo.* I have no need of a tutor.

*Count.* The pupil of Don Bazile, organist to the grand convent, who has the honour to teach music to madame, your . . .

*Bartholo.* Bazile! organist! who has the honour! I know it! Yes, indeed!

*Count [aside].* What a man! [*Aloud.*] A sudden illness which forces him to keep his bed . . . 11

*Bartholo.* Keep his bed! Bazile! He has done well to send me word, I will go to see him this moment.

*Count [aside].* Oh! the devil! [*Aloud.*] When I say his bed, sir, I . . . I . . . I mean his room:

*Bartholo.* Even if it be only a trifling illness . . . Go ahead, I will follow you.

*Count [in embarrassment].* Sir, I was charged . . . Nobody can hear us? 19

*Bartholo [aside].* He is some rogue. [*Aloud.*] No, master mysterious! Speak without fear, if you can.

*Count [aside].* Confounded old man! [*Aloud.*] Don Bazile charged me to tell you . . .

*Bartholo.* Speak louder, I am deaf in one ear.

*Count [raising his voice].* Ah! willingly . . . that Count Almaviva, who was lodging in the Plaza . . .

*Bartholo [in terror].* Speak lower, speak lower.

*Count [louder].* . . . has moved away this morning. As it was through me that he knew Count Almaviva . . .

*Bartholo.* Not so loud, I beg you. 31

*Count [in the same tone].* . . . was in this city, and that

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ACT III. SC. 2.

I have discovered that Miss Rosine has written to him . . .

*Bartholo.* Has written to him? My dear friend, not so loud I beg you! There, let us sit down, and have a friendly chat. You have discovered, you say, that Rosine . . .

*Count* [*anxiously*]. Assuredly. Bazile, disturbed on your account about this correspondence, has asked me to show you the letter; but the way in which you take things . . . 42

*Bartholo.* Goodness! I take them well. But can't you speak in a lower voice?

*Count.* You are deaf in one ear, you say.

*Bartholo.* Pardon, Master Alonzo, if you found me suspicious and harsh; but I am so completely surrounded by intriguers and plots; . . . and then your appearance, your age, your air . . . Your pardon. Well! you have the letter. 50

*Count.* In good time! If you take it this way, sir . . . But I am afraid lest some one may be eavesdropping.

*Bartholo.* Who do you think? All my servants are laid out! Rosine, in a rage, shut up in her room! The devil has entered my house. I will go to make sure . . . [*He opens Rosine's door softly.*]

*Count* [*aside*]. I have got into trouble by being too much in a hurry . . . Shall I keep the letter for the present? I shall have to take myself off; I might as well have stayed away . . . Show it to him . . .



If I can put Rosine upon her guard, to show it is a master-stroke. 62

*Bartholo [returning upon tip-toe].* She is sitting near the window with her back turned toward the door, reading over a letter from her cousin, an officer, which I had unsealed . . . Let's see hers.

*Count [hands him Rosine's letter].* Here it is. [*Aside.*] It is my letter which she is reading.

*Bartholo [reads].* 'Since you have told me your name and rank' . . . Ah! the wretch! It is indeed her hand. 71

*Count [in terror].* It is your turn to speak lower.

*Bartholo.* What an obligation, my dear fellow!

*Count.* When everything is done, if you think that you owe anything for it, you will be free to reward me. After a work which Don Bazile is at present carrying on with a lawyer . . .

*Bartholo.* With a lawyer, for my marriage?

*Count.* Would I have stopped without telling you that? He charged me to tell you that all would be ready for to-morrow. Then, if she resists . . . 81

*Bartholo.* She will resist.

*Count [tries to regain the letter from Bartholo, who keeps it in his possession].* That is the time when I may be able to serve you; we will show her her letter, and if it is necessary [*more mysteriously*]. I shall go so far as to tell her that I had it from a woman to whom the count had given it. You see that anxiety, shame, and spite may drive her immediately . . .

## The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 2.

*Bartholo* [*laughing*]. Calumny! Now indeed do I see that you really come from Bazile! But in order that all this may not appear to be a plot, would it not be well for her to know you beforehand? 93

*Count* [*represses a start of joy*]. That was Don Bazile's opinion. But how shall we do it? it is late . . . In the little time which remains . . .

*Bartholo*. I will tell her that you are coming in his place. Will you not give her a lesson?

*Count*. There is nothing that I would not do to please you. But bear in mind that all these stories of alleged masters are old dodges, comedy tricks. If she suspects . . . 102

*Bartholo*. If you are introduced by me, there is no likelihood of it. You look more like a disguised lover than an obliging friend.

*Count*. Really! Do you think that my appearance will add to the deceit?

*Bartholo*. I will leave the solution of that to some one cleverer than I. She is in a horrible humour this evening. But if she would only see you . . . Her harpsichord is in this cabinet. Amuse yourself while you wait; I am going to try the impossible in bringing her to you. 113

*Count*. Take care not to speak of the letter.

*Bartholo*. Before the decisive moment? That would destroy all its effect. You need not tell me things twice. [*Exit*.

## SCENE III

*Count [alone].* Saved! Phew! How hard this devilish fellow is to handle! Figaro knows him well. I could see myself as I lied; it surely made me look flat and stupid, and he has eyes! My word, if it had not been for the sudden inspiration of the letter, I must confess, I would have gone on like a fool. O Heaven! they are disputing in there. If she should refuse to come! Let's listen . . . She refuses to come out of her room, and I have lost all the advantage that I had gained. [*He listens again.*] Here she is; let us not appear at first. [*He enters the cabinet.*]

## SCENE IV

*Count, Rosine, Bartholo.*

*Rosine [with an affected anger].* All that you may say, sir, is useless; I have decided, I wish to hear nothing more about music.

*Bartholo.* Listen, my child; it is Master Alonzo, the pupil and friend of Don Bazile, chosen by him to be one of our witnesses. Music will calm you, I assure you.

*Rosine.* Oh! as for that, you may give up that notion. You want me to sing this evening! Where is this

## The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 4.

master whom you are afraid to send away? I will send him about his business, and Bazile's too. [*She sees her lover and utters a cry.*] Ah! . . .

*Bartholo.* What is the matter?

*Rosine* [*clasping her hands upon her breast*]. Ah! sir! . . . Ah, sir! . . .

*Bartholo.* She is ill again, Master Alonzo!

*Rosine.* No, I am not ill . . . but, as I turned . . . Ah!

*Count.* You turned your ankle, madame?

*Rosine.* Ah yes! I turned my ankle. It gave me a terrible pain.

*Count.* I perceived that it did.

*Rosine* [*gazing at the Count*]. It struck me to the heart.

*Bartholo.* A chair, a chair. Not an arm-chair here! [*Goes to seek one.*]

*Count.* Ah, Rosine!

*Rosine.* What an imprudence!

*Count.* I have a thousand things to tell you.

*Rosine.* He will not leave us.

*Count.* Figaro will come to our assistance.

*Bartholo* [*bringing an easy chair*]. There, darling, sit down. It is quite improbable, master bachelor, that she will take a lesson this evening; you will have to wait until another day. Farewell.

*Rosine* [*to the Count*]. No, wait; my pain is a little eased. [*To Bartholo.*] I see that I was wrong with you, sir; I will follow your example by repairing immediately . . .

*Bartholo.* Ah ! what good little dispositions women have !  
But after enduring such pain, my child, I will not allow you to make the least effort. Farewell, farewell, master bachelor.

*Rosine [to the Count].* One moment, sir, if you please !  
[*To Bartholo.*] I will think, sir, that you do not like to oblige me, if you prevent me from showing my regret by taking the lesson.

*Count [aside to Bartholo].* Do not oppose her, if you wish to take my advice.

*Bartholo.* That is enough, my dear. I am so far from trying to displease you, that I shall remain here while you are taking your lesson.

*Rosine.* Oh no, sir, I know that music has no attraction for you.

*Bartholo.* I assure you that I shall be enchanted this evening.

*Rosine [aside to the Count].* He puts me to the torment.

*Count [taking up a sheet of music].* Will you sing that, madame ?

*Rosine.* Yes, it is a very pretty piece from *The Useless Precaution*.

*Bartholo.* *The Useless Precaution* again !

*Count.* It is the newest thing of the day. It is a picture of Spring in a very lively *genre*. Does madame wish to try it ?

*Rosine [gazing at the Count].* With great pleasure ; a picture of Spring will enchant me ; it is the youth of

## The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 4.

Nature. After the winter, it seems as if the heart reaches a higher degree of sensibility, as a slave who has long been confined enjoys to the full the charm of liberty which has just been offered him.

*Bartholo [to the Count in a low voice].* Her head is for ever full of these romantic ideas.

*Count [in a low voice].* Do you see the point of it?

*Bartholo.* Zounds! [*Sits himself in the chair which*

*Rosine has been occupying.*]

*Rosine [sings].*

When o'er the plain  
Love once again  
Doth bring  
The lovers' cherished Spring,  
Then everything  
With new life thrills ;  
The flowers it fills  
And maketh young hearts sing.  
The flocks are seen  
Upon the green,  
And all the hills  
With the young lambs' cries resound.  
They frisk and bound—  
All things be growing,  
All blossoms blowing.  
And grazing sheep  
The faithful watchdogs keep,  
But Lindor, passion-moved,

Thinks none the less  
But of the joy of being loved  
By his fair shepherdess.

Far from her mother, with a blithesome song,  
Our shepherdess doth trip along  
To tryst her waiting lover.  
By this device doth Love entice  
And snare the pretty rover.  
Will song protection give her?

The piping reeds  
She lists and heeds, 90  
Birds' sweet alarms,  
Her swelling charms,  
Her fifteen years—  
All that she sees,  
All that she hears  
Fills her with fears  
And vague malease.

From his retreat  
Lindor discreet  
Doth meet perchance  
The maid's advance. 100  
The youth has just embraced her,  
The maid though pleased  
Doth feign a sudden anger  
In order to be teased,

# The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 4.

## Refrain.

Now sighs  
And sweet alarms and many a fond caress,  
Now amorous vows and lively tenderness,  
Bright eyes  
Dear dalliance and swift repartee  
All come in play, and now, perdie, 110  
Right soon our gentle shepherdess  
Feels her just rage grow less ;  
And if some jealous swain .  
Dare trouble such sweet pain,  
Our lovers in accord, •  
With every act and word  
Their highest joys conceal,  
For when we love indeed  
Restraint can naught but feed  
• The fires of love we feel. 120

*As he listens, Bartholo falls asleep. The Count, during the refrain, ventures to seize her hand, which he covers with kisses. In her emotion the song dies away, until it ceases in the middle of the cadence at the last word. The orchestra follows the movement of the singer, and is silent with her. The absence of the sounds which had put Bartholo to sleep awakes him. The Count rises, Rosine and the orchestra quickly continue the air.*



*Count.* Truly it is a charming piece, and madame sings it with a degree of understanding . . .

*Rosine.* You flatter me, sir ; the praise belongs entirely to the master.

*Bartholo [yawning].* I think that I must have slept a little during this charming piece. I have my little weaknesses. I go and come, I become a little giddy, and as soon as I sit down, my poor legs . . . [*He rises and pushes away the chair.*] 130

*Rosine [whispers to the Count].* Figaro does not come.

*Count.* Let us try to kill time.

*Bartholo.* But, master bachelor, I have already said so to that old Bazile ; is there no way of making her study something more lively than all these grand *arias*, which go up and down, rolling along with a hi, ho, a, a, a, a, and which seem to me like so many funerals ? Now, some of those little airs that they used to sing in my youth, and which all remembered so easily. I used to know some of them . . . For example . . . [*During the prelude he scratches his head and sings, snapping his fingers and dancing with his knees bent in the manner of old men.*]

‘Dost thou, my Rosinette, 141

Elect to get

A spouse, the prince of men ? . . . ?

[*To the Count, laughing.*] There is a Fanchonette in the song, but I substituted Rosinette for her, to make it more pleasing to her, and to make it fit the cir-

# The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 3.

cumstances. Ha! ha! ha! ha! Pretty good, isn't it?

Count [*laughing*]. Ha! ha! ha! yes, capital.

## SCENE V

*Figaro in the background, Rosine, Bartholo, Count.*

*Bartholo* [*sings*]. 'Dost thou, my Rosinette.

Elect to get

A spouse, the prince of men?

No Thyrsis I—yet when

The shadows fall, at ending of the day,

I still am worth my fee,

For in obscurity

The bravest cats are merely sombre grey.'

[*He repeats the refrain dancing. Figaro, behind him, imitates his movements.*]

No Thyrsis I, etc.

[*Perceiving Figaro.*] Ah! enter master barber: come in, you are charming! 11

*Figaro* [*salutes*]. Sir, it is true that my mother used to tell me so: but I am somewhat deformed since that time. [*Aside to the Count.*] 'Bravo, my lord. [*During the whole scene, the Count makes numerous attempts to speak to Rosine, but the restless and vigilant eye of her guardian prevents him, which*

*produces a sort of dumb show of all the actors not taking part in the discussion between the doctor and Figaro].*

*Bartholo.* Have you come again to bleed, drug, and prostrate my whole household?

*Figaro.* Feast days, sir, come only once a year; but, without counting my daily attentions, you may have seen, sir, that when they need them, my zeal does not wait upon command . . . 20

*Bartholo.* Your zeal does not wait! What have you to say, master zealot, to that wretch who yawns and sleeps though wide awake? and the other, who, for the last three hours, has been sneezing enough to crack his cranium, or blow out his brains! What have you to say to that?

*Figaro.* What have I to say to that?

*Bartholo.* Yes! 20

*Figaro.* Well, I should say . . . I should say to him who sneezes, *God bless you*: and *Go to bed*, to him who yawns. It is not that, sir, which will increase the bill.

*Bartholo.* Truly, no: but it is bleedings and medicines which would increase it if I would stand it. Is it due to your zeal also that you bandaged my mule's eyes? And will your bandage return its sight?

*Figaro.* If it does not bring back the sight, it will no longer prevent it from seeing.

*Bartholo.* Wait till I find it in the bill! . . . I will not stand such extravagance!

## The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 4.

*Figaro.* Faith, sir, there being little to choose between stupidity and folly, in which I see no profit, I wish at least to find some pleasure, and long live joy! Who knows if the world will last three weeks longer? 43

*Bartholo.* You would do much better, master reasoner, to pay me my hundred crowns and the interest, without any nonsense: I warn you.

*Figaro.* Do you doubt my honesty, sir? Your hundred crowns! I would rather owe them to you all my life than deny them to you for a single moment.

*Bartholo.* And tell me how Mistress Figaro liked the bon-bons that you took her. 57

*Figaro.* What bon-bons? What do you mean?

*Bartholo.* Yes, those bon-bons, in the bag made from a sheet of this letter paper . . . this morning.

*Figaro.* The devil fly away with me if . . .

*Rosine* [interrupting him]. Did you take care to tell her that they were from me, Master Figaro? I told you to do so.

*Figaro.* Ah yes! this morning's bon-bons! How stupid I am! I had quite forgotten that . . . Oh! excellent, madame, admirable! 61

*Bartholo.* Excellent! admirable! Yes, doubtless, Master Figaro, you are retracing your steps! That is a fine business, sir, that you ply. . . .

*Figaro.* What is the matter with it, sir?

*Bartholo.* Which will acquire a fine reputation for you, sirrah.

*Figaro.* I will try to live up to it, sir.

*Bartholo.* Say that you will live it down, sirrah.

*Figaro.* As you please, sir.

70

*Bartholo.* You ride a high horse, sirrah. Know that when I dispute with a fool, I never yield to him.

*Figaro* [*turns his back upon him*]. We differ in that, sir, for I always yield to him.

*Bartholo.* Hey! What does he mean by that bachelor?

*Figaro.* That you think that you have to do with some village barber, who only knows how to handle the razor. Learn, sir, that I have laboured with my pen at Madrid, and that were it not for the envious . . .

80

*Bartholo.* Why did you not stay there, without coming here to change your profession!

*Figaro.* We do what we can; put yourself in my place.

*Bartholo.* Put myself in your place! Ah! zounds! I would say a fine lot of stupidities!

*Figaro.* Sir, you do not begin badly; I appeal to your colleague, who is dreaming there. . . .

*Count* [*turning to him*]. I . . . I am not his colleague.

*Figaro.* No? Seeing you here in consultation, I thought that you were pursuing the same object.

91

*Bartholo* [*angrily*]. Well, what brings you here? Is it to bring madame another letter this evening? Speak; must I retire?

*Figaro.* How harshly you treat the poor world! Zounds,

## The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 3.

sir, I come to shave you, that's all. Is not to-day your day?

*Bartholo.* You may return later.

*Figaro.* Ah yes, return! The whole garrison takes medicine to-morrow morning. I obtained the contract through some friends of mine. Consider, then, how much time I have to lose! Will you go into your room, sir? 103

*Bartholo.* No, I will not. But . . . why can't you shave me here?

*Rosine* [*contemptuously*]. You are polite! And why not in my apartments?

*Bartholo.* You are angry? Pardon, my child; you may finish taking your lesson; it is in order not to lose for a moment the pleasure of hearing you. 110

*Figaro* [*whispers to the Count.*] We cannot get him out of here! [*Aloud*]. Come, Eveillé! Jeunesse! the basin, the water, everything master needs!

*Bartholo.* That's right, call them! Fatigued, harassed, belaboured at your hands, did they not need to go to bed?

*Figaro.* Well! I will go and look for everything; is it not in your room? [*To the Count aside.*] I am going to coax him out. 119

*Bartholo* [*unfastens his bunch of keys and says reflectively:*] No, no, I will go myself. [*Whispers to the Count as he goes out:*] Keep your eyes on them, I beg you.

SCENE VI

*Figaro, Count, Rosine.*

*Figaro.* Oh ! what a great opportunity we have missed !  
He was going to give me the keys. Was not the  
key of the blind among them ?

*Rosine.* It was the newest of them all.

SCENE VII

*Bartholo, Figaro, Count, Rosine.*

*Bartholo* [returning]. [*Aside.*] Good ! I do not know  
what I am doing in having this cursed barber here.  
[*To Figaro.*] Here. [*Gives him the keys.*] In my  
dressing-room, under the bureau ; touch nothing  
else.

*Figaro.* The plague ! It would be good enough for you,  
suspicious as you are ! [*Aside, going off.*] See how  
Heaven protects innocence !

SCENE VIII

*Bartholo, Count, Rosine.*

*Bartholo* [*whispers to the Count*]. He is the knave who took the letter to the Count.

*Count* [*in a low voice*]. He looks like a rogue to me.

*Bartholo*. He will not catch me again.

*Count*. I think that as far as that goes the worst is over.

*Bartholo*. Everything considered, I thought it more prudent to send him to my room than leave him with her.

*Count*. They could not have said a word without my being a third party to it. 11

*Rosine*. It is very polite, gentlemen, to whisper continually! And my lesson? [*They hear a noise as of dishes upset.*]

*Bartholo* [*with a cry*]. What do I hear! That cruel barber must have dropped everything downstairs, and the finest pieces in my dressing-case! [*He runs out.*]



SCENE IX

*Count, Rosine.*

*Count.* Let us profit by the moments which Figaro's intelligence has secured us. Grant me, this evening, I beg you, madame, one moment's converse, which is absolutely necessary to save you from the slavery to which you are destined.

*Rosine.* Ah, Lindor !

*Count.* I can climb to your blind ; and as for the letter which I received from you this morning, I found myself forced. . . .

SCENE X

*Rosine, Bartholo, Figaro, Count.*

*Bartholo.* I was not mistaken ; everything is broken, smashed.

*Figaro.* It must be a great calamity to make so much noise ! You can't see at all on the stairs. [*He shows the key to the Count.*] As I came upstairs I stumbled upon a key. . . .

*Bartholo.* You should take care what you are doing. Stumble upon a key ! The clever man !

*Figaro.* My faith, sir, you may look for a cleverer.

SCENE XI

*The Preceding, Don Bazile.*

*Rosine [aside in terror].* Don Bazile ! . . .

*Count [aside].* Good Heaven !

*Figaro [aside].* 'Tis the devil !

*Bartholo [advancing to meet him].* Ah ! Bazile, my friend, you are soon cured. Your accident has had no bad consequences ? Truly, Master Alonzo had frightened me considerably about you ; ask him ; I was going out to see you, and if he had not restrained me . . .

*Bazile [in astonishment].* Master Alonzo ? . . .

*Figaro [stamps his foot].* What ! More bad places ?  
Two hours for one poor beard. Confound such a customer !

12

*Bazile [looking at all].* Will you be kind enough to tell me, sirs ? . . .

*Figaro.* You may speak to him when I am gone.

*Bazile.* But why should that be necessary, anyway ?

*Count.* You should be silent, Bazile. Do you think to teach him something which he does not know ? I told him that you had requested me to come to give a music lesson in your place.

20

*Bazile [in greater astonishment].* The music lesson ! . . .  
Alonzo ! . . .

*Rosine [aside to Bazile].* Come ! Will you be still ?

*Bazile.* And she too !

*Count [in a low voice to Bartholo].* Whisper to him that we have all agreed.

*Bartholo [aside to Bazile].* Don't give us the lie, Bazile, by saying that he is not your pupil ; you would spoil everything.

*Bazile.* Ha ! ha ! 30

*Bartholo [aloud].* Truly, Bazile, no one has more talent than your scholar.

*Bazile [in astonishment].* Than my scholar ! . . .  
*[Whispers.]* I was coming to tell you that the Count has moved.

*Bartholo [in a low voice].* Silence, I know it.

*Bazile [lowering his voice].* Who told you ?

*Bartholo [whispers].* He, of course !

*Count [whispers].* Certainly I : if you would only listen.

*Rosine [in a whisper to Bazile].* Is it so difficult to keep still ? 41

*Figaro [the same.]* Hum ! your great hippogriff ! He is deaf !

*Bazile [aside].* Who the devil is it that they are fooling here ? Every one seems to be in the secret.

*Bartholo [aloud].* Well ! Bazile, your lawyer ?

*Figaro.* You have the whole evening to talk about your lawyer.

*Bartholo [to Bazile].* One word only ; tell me if you are really satisfied with the lawyer ? 50

*Bazile [in a fright].* With the lawyer ?

## The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. II.

*Count* [smiling]. Didn't you see your lawyer?

*Bazile* [impatiently]. No, I did not see the lawyer.

*Count* [aside to *Bartholo*]. You don't want him to explain before her, do you? Send him off.

*Bartholo* [in a whisper to the *Count*]. You are right.

[To *Bazile*.] But what made you ill so suddenly?

*Bazile* [angrily]. I don't understand you.

*Count* [aside, puts a purse into his hand]. Yes, he has just asked you what you expect to do here in your present state of illness. 61

*Figaro*. He is as pale as death.

*Bazile*. Ah! I understand. . . .

*Count*. Go to bed, my dear *Bazile*: you are not well and you give us a terrible fright. Go to bed!

*Figaro*. He looks very much upset. Go to bed! . . .

*Bartholo*. Upon my word! You could tell a league away that he has the fever. Go to bed!

*Rosine*. Why did you come out? They say that it is catching. Go to bed! 70

*Bazile* [completely astonished]. I, go to bed?

*All*. Oh! certainly.

*Bazile* [gazing at them all]. In fact, I do believe that I would not do ill to retire; I feel as if I were a little out of sorts.

*Bartholo*. To-morrow, again, if you are better.

*Count*. *Bazile*, I shall be at your house very early to-morrow.

*Figaro*. Believe me, keep yourself warm in your bed.

*Rosine.* Good evening, Master Basile. 80

*Bazile [aside].* The devil fly away with me if I understand anything about it ; and if it were not for this purse. . . .

*All.* Good evening, Bazile, good evening.

*Bazile [exit].* Well ! Good evening, then, good evening.  
[*They accompany him with a burst of laughter.*]

## SCENE XII

*The Preceding, except Bazile*

*Bartholo [with an important air].* That man is not at all well.

*Rosine.* His eyes are wild.

*Count.* He has probably caught a chill.

*Figaro.* You saw how he talked to himself? How easy it is for us to fall ill ! [*To Bartholo.*] Now, are you going to decide this time ? [*He pushes an easy chair to some distance from the Count and hands him the linen.*]

*Count.* Before we finish, madame, I must tell you one thing which is very essential for progress in the art which I have the honour to teach you. [*He approaches her and whispers in her ear.*] 13

*Bartholo [to Figaro].* Come now ! It seems as if it were on purpose that you approach me, and stand in front of me to prevent me from seeing . . .

## The Barber of Seville

ACT III. SC. 12.

*Count* [*in a low voice to Rosine*]. We have the key to the blind, and we shall be here at midnight.

*Figaro* [*ties the napkin around Bartholo's neck*]. See what? If it were a dancing lesson, we might let you look at it; but a singing lesson! . . . Dear me! 21

*Bartholo*. What's that?

*Figaro*. I do not know what has got into my eye. [*He brings his head nearer.*]

*Bartholo*. Don't rub so hard.

*Figaro*. That's the left. Would you try to breathe a little harder for me? [*Bartholo seizes Figaro's head, looks over it, pushes him away roughly, and steals behind the lovers to listen to their conversation.*] 29

*Count* [*in a low voice, to Rosine*]. And as for your letter, I soon found myself so hard put to it for an excuse to stay here. . . .

*Figaro* [*at a distance to warn them*]. Hem! . . .  
Hem! . . .

*Count*. In despair also at seeing my disguise useless. . . .

*Bartholo* [*slipping between them*]. Your disguise useless! .

*Rosine* [*terrified*]. Oh! . . .

*Bartholo*. Very well, madame, do not trouble yourself. What! under my very eyes, in my presence, you dare to outrage me in that fashion! 41

*Count*. What is the matter with you, sir?

*Bartholo*. Perfidious Alonzo!

*Count*. Master Bartholo, if you often have whims like

that of which chance has made me a witness, I no longer wonder at the disgust which the young lady shows at the prospect of becoming your wife.

*Rosine.* His wife ! I ! Pass my days in the company of a jealous old man, who, for its one joy, offers my youth an abominable slavery ! 50

*Bartholo.* Ah ! what do I hear ?

*Rosine.* Yes, I tell you so to your face : I will give my heart and my hand to him who is able to release me from this horrible prison, where my person and my property are detained in defiance of all justice.

[*Exit Rosine.*]

# SCENE XIII

*Bartholo, Figaro, Count.*

*Bartholo.* I am choking with anger.

*Count.* In short, sir, for a young woman. . . .

*Figaro.* Yes, a young woman and old age, that's what troubles the heads of old men.

*Bartholo.* What ! When I catch them in the act !  
Infernal barber ! I have a mind . . .

*Figaro.* I am going to retire ; he is mad.

*Count.* And I also ; upon my word, he is mad.

*Figaro.* He is mad ; he is mad. . . . [*Exit both.*]

SCENE XIV

*Bartholo, alone, pursues them.*

*Bartholo.* I am mad ! Infamous bribers ! Emissaries of the devil, whose errands you are doing here, and may the devil fly away with you all ! . . . I am mad ! . . . I saw them as clearly as I see this desk . . . and to brazen it out so ! . . . Ah ! Bazile is the only one who can explain it all. Yes, let's send for him. Holloa, somebody ! . . . Ah ! I forget that I have nobody . . . A neighbour, the first comer ; no matter who. It is enough to make me lose my mind ! . . . it is enough to make me lose my mind !

During the entr'acte, the stage grows dark : the roar of a storm is heard.



ACT IV

SCENE I

*The stage is darkened.*

*Bartholo, Don Bazile, a paper lantern in his hand.*

*Bartholo.* What, Bazile, you do not know him? Is it possible that you have just told me the truth?

*Bazile.* If you should ask me one hundred times, I should always give you the same answer. If he handed over to you Rosine's letter, he is doubtless one of the Count's emissaries. But from the magnificence of the present which he made me, it might very well be the Count himself.

*Bartholo.* Not very likely. But *à propos* of that present . . . why did you take it? 10

*Bazile.* Both of you seemed to have an agreement; I knew nothing about it; and in all these cases which are hard to decide, a purse of gold always seems to me an unanswerable argument. And then, as the proverb says, what is good to take . . .

*Bartholo.* I understand, is good . . .

## The Barber of Seville

ACT IV. SC. 1.

*Bazile.* To keep.

*Bartholo* [*in surprise*]. Ha ! ha !

*Bazile.* Yes, I have arranged several little proverbs like that with variations. But let us come to the point : what are your plans ? 22

*Bartholo.* If you were in my place, Bazile, would you not make the most determined efforts to keep her in your power ?

*Bazile.* No, upon my word, doctor. In all sorts of property, possession amounts to little ; it is their enjoyment which renders one happy : my opinion is that marrying a woman who does not love you is only to expose yourself. . . . 30

*Bartholo.* You would fear mischances ?

*Bazile.* Ha, ha, sir ! . . . we see many of them this year. . . I would not do violence to her heart.

*Bartholo.* Your servant, Bazile. It is much better for her to weep in the possession of myself, than for me to die of grief at not having her.

*Bazile.* Oh, it is a matter of life and death ? Marry, doctor, marry.

*Bartholo.* I shall do so, and this very night.

*Bazile.* Farewell, then. Remember, when you speak to your ward, to paint them all blacker than hell. 41

*Bartholo.* You are right.

*Bazile.* Calumny, doctor, calumny ! You must always use that.

*Bartholo.* Here is Rosine's letter which that Alonzo

handed over to me, and he showed me, unwillingly, the use which I must make of it in dealing with her.

*Bazile.* Farewell ; we shall all be here at four o'clock.

*Bartholo.* Why not sooner ?

*Bazile.* Impossible ; the notary is engaged. 50

*Bartholo.* For a marriage ?

*Bazile.* Yes, at the barber Figaro's ; his niece is going to be married.

*Bartholo.* His niece ? he has none.

*Bazile.* That is what they told the notary.

*Bartholo.* That rascal is in the plot : what the devil ! . . .

*Bazile.* Would you think ? . . .

*Bartholo.* My word, those fellows are so alert ! Look here, my friend, I am uneasy. Go to the notary's. Tell him to return with you immediately. 60

*Bazile.* It rains, the weather is infernal ; but nothing will stop me in your service. What are you doing ?

*Bartholo.* I will lead you ; have they not put that Figaro up to crippling all my servants ! I am alone here.

*Bazile.* I have my lantern.

*Bartholo.* There, Bazile, there is my pass-key : I will wait, I will watch for you ; and, come who will, none but the notary and yourself will get in to-night.

*Bazile.* With these precautions, you are sure of your case. 70

SCENE II

*Rosine, alone, coming out of her room.*

*Rosine.* It seemed to me that I heard talking. It has just struck midnight ; Lindor has not come ! This bad weather was the very thing to help him. Sure not to meet a soul . . . Ah, Lindor ! if you have deceived me ! . . . What noise do I hear ? . . . Heaven ! It is my guardian. Let us get back.

SCENE III

*Rosine, Bartholo.*

*Bartholo* [*holding up the light*]. Ah, Rosine ! since you have not yet retired to your apartments. . . .

*Rosine.* I am going to retire.

*Bartholo.* In this horrible weather you will not get any repose, and I have many important things to tell you.

*Rosine.* What will you have, sir ? Is it not enough to be tormented by day ?

*Bartholo.* Rosine, listen to me.

*Rosine.* To-morrow I will listen to you.

*Bartholo.* One moment, if you please !

*Rosine* [*aside*]. If he would only come !

*Bartholo* [*showing her the letter*]. Do you recognise this letter?

*Rosine* [*recognising it*]. Ah! Great Heaven!

*Bartholo*. My intention, Rosine, is not to reproach you : at your age one may err ; but I am your best friend : listen to me.

*Rosine*. I am overwhelmed.

*Bartholo*. That letter which you wrote to Count Almaviva . . . 21

*Rosine* [*astounded*]. To Count Almaviva ! . . .

*Bartholo*. Now see what a terrible fellow this Count is : as soon as he received it he made a trophy of it ; I have it from a woman to whom he gave it.

*Rosine*. Count Almaviva ! . . .

*Bartholo*. You can hardly persuade yourself that it, is so horrible. Inexperience, Rosine, makes your sex, confiding and credulous ; but learn ~~into~~ what a trap they were enticing you. That woman has warned me of everything, apparently in order to put out of the way a rival so dangerous as yourself. I shudder at the thought ! The most abominable plot, between Almaviva, Figaro, and that Alonzo, that pretended scholar of Bazile's, who bears another name and is only a vile agent of the Count, was going to drag you down into an abyss from which nothing could have drawn you out. 38

*Rosine* [*overwhelmed*]. How horrible ! . . . What ! Lindor ? . . . what ! that young man . . .

## The Barber of Seville

ACT IV. SC. 3.

*Bartholo* [*aside*]. Ah! it is Lindor.

*Rosine*. It is for Count Almaviva. . . . It is for another. . . .

*Bartholo*. That is what they said when they gave me your letter.

*Rosine* [*angrily*]. Ah! what an indignity! He will be punished for it. Sir, you desire to marry me?

*Bartholo*. You know the depth of my feelings.

*Rosine*. If you can still feel so I am yours. 48

*Bartholo*. Well, the notary will come this very evening.

*Rosine*. That is not all; O Heaven! am I sufficiently humiliated! . . . Know that in a little while the traitor will dare to enter through this blind, whose key they have artfully stolen from you.

*Bartholo* [*glancing at his bunch of keys*]. Oh, the rascals! . . . My child, I will leave you no more.

*Rosine* [*in terror*]. Oh, sir! and if they should be armed? 57

*Bartholo*. You are right: I would lose my revenge. Go up to Marcelline: lock yourself in her room with a double bolt. I am going to call the police, and wait for him near the house. Arrested as a thief, we shall have the pleasure of being at once avenged and delivered from him! And remember that my love will repay you . . .

*Rosine* [*in despair*]. Only forget my errors. [*Aside.*] Ah! I am sufficiently punished for it!

*Bartholo* [*going out*]. Let us go to set our trap. At last I have her. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV

*Rosine, alone.*

*Rosine.* His love will repay me. . . . Wretch that I am ! . . .

[*She takes her handkerchief and gives way to her tears.*] What shall I do ? . . . He will come. I will

remain and dissemble with him, to contemplate him for a moment in all his blackness. The baseness of his actions will be my preserver. Ah ! I have great need of one. What a noble figure ! what a gentle air ! what a tender voice ! and they are only the vile agents of a corrupter. Ah ! unfortunate ! unfortunate ! . . . Heaven ! some one is opening the blind !

[*She runs out.*]

SCENE V

*The Count, Figaro wrapped in a mantle, appears at the window.*

*Figaro* [*speaking from the outside*]. Some one has just rushed out ; shall I enter ?

*Count* [*outside*]. A man ?

*Figaro.* No.

*Count.* It is Rosine, whom your hideous figure has probably put to flight.

## The Barber of Seville

ACT IV. SC. 3.

*Figaro* [*leaps into the room*]. My word, I believe you.  
. . . . Here we are at last, despite the rain, the thunder,  
and the lightning.

*Count* [*wrapped in a long mantle*]. Give me your hand.  
[*Also leaps in.*] Victory! 11

*Figaro* [*throws off his mantle*]. We are quite drenched.  
Charming weather to go on love quests. My lord,  
how do you like this evening?

*Count*. Superb for a lover.

*Figaro*. Yes, but for the confidant? . . . And suppose  
some one should surprise us here?

*Count*. Are you not with me? I have other anxieties:  
that is, to persuade her to leave her guardian's house  
immediately. 20

*Figaro*. You have in your interest three passions very  
powerful over the fair sex: love, hatred, and fear.

*Count* [*gazing into the darkness*]. How shall I tell her  
abruptly that the notary is waiting at your house to  
unite us? She will think my plan a very bold one.  
She will call me audacious.

*Figaro*. If she calls you audacious, you may call her  
cruel. Women are much pleased to be called cruel.  
At the most, if her love is as strong as you hope, you  
may tell her who you are: she will no longer doubt  
you. 31



SCENE VI

*Count, Rosine, Figaro.*

*Figaro lights all the candles on the table.*

*Count.* Here she is! My fair Rosine! . . .

*Rosine* [*very calmly*]. I began, sir, to fear that you were not coming.

*Count.* Charming anxiety! . . . I should not take advantage of circumstances to ask you to share the lot of an unfortunate man; \*but whatever asylum you should choose, I swear upon my honour . . .

*Rosine.* Sir, if the gift of my hand had not had to follow instantly that of my heart, you would not be here. May necessity justify whatever irregularity there is in this interview! II

*Count.* You, Rosine! the companion of an unfortunate without fortune, without birth! . . .

*Rosine.* Birth, fortune! Let us put aside such attendants on chance, and if you will assure me that your intentions are pure . . .

*Count* [*at her feet*]. Ah, Rosine! I adore you! . . .

*Rosine* [*indignantly*]. Stop, you wretch! You dare to profane! You adore me! . . . Go! you are no longer dangerous to me; I was waiting for this word only to detest you. But before I abandon you.

## The Barber of Seville

ACT IV. SC. 6

to the remorse which awaits you, [*weeping*] learn that I did love you ; learn that it made me happy to think of sharing your poor lot. Miserable Lindor ! I was going to leave everything to follow you, but the cowardly abuse which you have made of my kindness, and the baseness of that horrible Count Almaviva, to whom you sold me, have brought me this evidence of my weakness. Do you recognise this letter ?

30

*Count* [*excitedly*]. Which your guardian gave you ?

*Rosine* [*proudly*]. Yes, I am obliged to him for it.

*Count*. Heaven ! how glad I am ! He had it from me.

In my embarrassment, yesterday, I made use of it to draw him out, and I have been unable to find a favourable moment to tell you of it. Ah, Rosine ! it is true, then, that you love me truly !

*Figaro*. My lord, you sought a woman who should love you for yourself.

*Rosine*. My lord ! what is he saying ?

40

*Count* [*throwing aside his heavy mantle, appears magnificently clothed*]. O most beloved of women ! I must no longer deceive you : the happy man whom you see at your feet is not Lindor : I am Count Almaviva, who loves you to distraction and who has sought for you in vain for the last six months.

*Rosine* [*falling into the arms of the Count*]. Ah ! . . .

*Count* [*frightened*]. Figaro ?

*Figaro*. Don't be uneasy, my lord : the sweet emotion of

joy never has sorrowful consequences. There, she is coming to her senses ; my word ! how beautiful she is ! 52

*Rosine.* Ah, Lindor ! . . . Ah, sir ! how guilty I am !

I was going to yield to my guardian this very night.

*Count.* You, Rosine ?

*Rosine.* Only see how I am punished : I would have passed my life in detesting you. ° Ah, Lindor ! is it not a most frightful punishment to hate, when you feel impelled to love ?

*Figaro* [looking out of the window]. My lord, our escape is cut off, the ladder is taken away ! 61

*Count.* Taken away !

*Rosine* [in anxiety]. Yes, it is I . . . it is the doctor. That is the fruit of my credulity. He deceived me. I confessed everything, betrayed everything : he knows that you are here, and will come with the police.

*Figaro* [looking out again]. My lord, they are opening the street door.

*Rosine* [hastening to the arms of the Count in terror]. Ah, Lindor ! 71

*Count* [firmly]. Rosine, you love me ! I fear no one, and you shall be my wife. I shall have the pleasure of punishing the odious old fellow as I please.

*Rosine.* No, no, pardon him, dear Lindor ! My heart is so full that vengeance can find no place there.

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ACT IV. SC. 7.

## SCENE VII

*The Notary, Don Bazile, and the preceding*

*Figaro.* My lord, it is our notary.

*Count.* And friend Bazile with him!

*Bazile.* Ah! what do I see?

*Figaro.* By what chance, my friend?

*Bazile.* By what chance, sirs?

*Notary.* Are these the betrothed

*Count.* Yes, sir. You were to unite Señora Rosine and myself to-night, at the house of the barber Figaro; but we preferred this house for reasons which you will know later. Have you our contract?

*Notary.* I have the honour, then, to speak to his Excellency Count Almaviva?

*Figaro.* Precisely.

*Bazile* [*aside*]. If that is the reason that he gave me his pass-key. . . .

*Notary.* I have two marriage contracts here, my lord; let us not confuse them: here is yours, and here is Bartholo's with Señora . . . Rosine too? These ladies, apparently, are two sisters who bear the same name?

*Count.* Let us sign quickly. Don Bazile will be willing to serve as the second witness. [*They sign.*]

*Bazile.* But, your excellency . . . I don't understand. . . .

*Count.* Master Bazile, a trifle confuses you, and all astonishes you.

*Bazile.* But, my lord . . . if the doctor . . .

*Count* [*throwing him a purse*]. You are acting like a child! Sign quickly.

*Bazile* [*astonished*]. Ha! ha! 30

*Figaro.* Why do you make a difficulty of signing?

*Bazile* [*weighing the purse*]. There is no further difficulty; but it is because, when I have once given my word, I need reasons of great weight . . . [*He signs.*]

SCENE VIII

*Bartholo, a Justice of the Peace, Policemen, Servants with torches, and the preceding.*

*Bartholo* [*sees the Count kissing Rosine's hand, and Figaro grotesquely embracing Don Bazile; he cries out, seizing the Notary by the throat*]. Rosine with these rascals! Arrest them all. I have one of them by the collar.

*Notary.* I am your notary.

*Bazile.* He is your notary. Are you fooling?

*Bartholo.* Ah, Don Bazile! how is it that you are here?

*Bazile.* Rather, why were you not here?

*Justice* [*pointing out Figaro*]. One moment; I know this fellow. What are you doing in this house at such an unheard-of hour? 10

## The Barber of Seville

ACT IV. SC. 1.

*Figaro.* Unheard-of hour? You see very well that it is quite as near morning as evening. Besides, I am a retainer of his excellency my Lord Count Almaviva.

*Bartholo.* Almaviva!

*Justice.* They are not robbers, then?

*Bartholo.* Let us drop that. Everywhere else, Count Almaviva, I am your excellency's servant; but you understand that superiority of rank is useless here. If you please, have the kindness to retire. 19

*Count.* Yes, rank must be useless here; but what is more powerful, however, is the preference to you which the young lady has just shown me, by voluntarily giving herself to me.

*Bartholo.* What is he saying, Rosine?

*Rosine.* He is telling you the truth. What causes your astonishment? Was I not this very night to be avenged of a deceiver? I am.

*Bazile.* When I told you that it was the Count himself, doctor?

*Bartholo.* What does that matter to me? This is a ridiculous marriage! Where are the witnesses? 31

*Notary.* There is nothing lacking. I have been assisted by these two gentlemen.

*Bartholo.* What, Bazile! . . . you signed?

*Bazile.* What would you have? This devil of a fellow always has his pockets full of irresistible arguments.

*Bartholo.* I despise your arguments. I shall make use of my authority.

*Count.* You have lost it by abusing it.

*Bartholo.* The young lady is a minor. 40

*Figaro.* She has just come of age.<sup>1</sup>

*Bartholo.* Who is speaking to you, you rascal?

*Count.* The young lady is noble and beautiful ; I am a man of rank, young and rich ; she is my wife : does any one wish to dispute me this title which honours us both ?

*Bartholo.* You shall never take her from my hands.

*Count.* She is no longer in your power. I will put her under the protection of the law ; and this gentleman, whom you have summoned yourself, will protect her from any violence which you may wish to offer her. True magistrates are the protectors of all the oppressed. 53

*Justice.* Certainly. And this useless resistance to a most honourable marriage shows well enough how frightened he is over the ill-administration of his ward's property, of which he will have to render an account.

*Count.* Ah ! let him consent to all, and I shall ask nothing further of him. 60

*Figaro.* But my quittance for my hundred crowns. Let us not lose our heads.

*Bartholo [angrily].* They were all against me . . . I have thrust my head into a scrape.

<sup>1</sup> Under the French law, a married woman was considered as of age.

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ACT IV. SC. 3.

*Basile.* What scrape? Remember, doctor, that although you cannot have the woman, you have the money—yes, you have the money.

*Bartholo.* Oh! leave me alone, Bazile! You think only of money. Much do I care for money! Of course I shall keep it, but do you think that is the reason which decides me? [He signs.]

*Figaro* [laughing]. Ha! ha! ha! my lord, they are of the same family. 73

*Notary.* But, gentlemen, I do not quite understand. Are there not two young ladies who bear the same name?

*Figaro.* No, sir, there is only one.

*Bartholo* [in despair]. And it was I who brought them the ladder in order that the marriage should be more certain! Ah! I have defeated myself for lack of precautions. 80

*Figaro.* Lack of good sense. But to tell you the truth, doctor, when youth and love have agreed to deceive an old man, all that he does to prevent it may well be called *The Useless Precaution*.



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